

108 STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Navamsa Charts, Nakshatras, and TriDecile Aspects

by Santino Mancuso

Copyright © 2006 All Rights Reserved

INTRODUCTION:

108 Steps to Enlightenment

Some Buddhist temples have 108 steps leading to the temple, there are 108 beads in the Hindu beads used for prayer, very roughly analogous to the Christian rosary, and Krishna has 108 gopis surrounding him. The number 108 appears as a critically important number in sacred scriptures, myths, architecture, and rituals.

WHY 108?

The number 108 is centrally important in a vision of the Universe as a cosmic web or grand design in ancient philosophy, theology, and cosmology.

THEOLOGY, ASTROLOGY AND GEOMETRY INTERTWINED

The zodiac of 12 signs is familiar to most westerners. In Vedic (Indian) astrology, a zodiac of 27 signs, known as the nakshatras, or lunar zodiac, is also critically important. The zodiac of 12 signs has a basis in solar motion: each day the Sun moves through approximately 1 degree of this zodiac, and in 1 month the Sun moves through 1 zodiac, and in a year the Sun moves through the entire zodiac.

The nakshatras are closely related to lunar motion. The Moon takes 27 1/3 days to revolve around the Earth and return to the same position, so the Moon moves through 1 nakshatra in about 1 day. A nakshatra has a length of 13 deg 20 min, very close to the mean motion of the Moon.

As we shall see below, however, it is the interweaving of geometric patterns, not the motion of the Moon, that gives the nakshatras their awesome significance, and also their relationship to the number 108.

In Vedic astrology each of the 27 nakshatras is further divided into 4 sections of 3 deg 20 min, and these sections of 3 deg 20 min are known as padas, which translates roughly to "steps". The total number of padas is 27 times 4, or 108. It is the padas, the steps, that are the steps in our evolution to the divine.

Also important in Vedic astrology is the use of "mini-zodiacs". Instead of only dividing the sky into 12 sections of 30 degrees for the solar zodiac, and into 27 sections of 13 deg 20 min for the lunar zodiac, Vedic astrologers also divide the sky into 9 "mini-zodiacs" of 40 degrees.

In other words, instead of stretching the zodiac around the entire ecliptic plane to form 12 sections of 30 degrees, one can also create 9 successive zodiacs of 40 degrees each. The result is known as the **navamsa** chart. Each navamsa zodiac consists of 12 signs of 3 deg 20 min for a total length of 40 degrees. This set of 9 zodiacs of length 40 degrees is known as the navamsa chart.

A zodiac sign in the navamsa chart is also a **pada** in the nakshatra zodiac. In other words 3 deg 20 min is $1/108$ of the circle and $1/108$ of the circle can be regarded as $1/12$ of $1/9$ of the zodiac (i.e. $9 \times 12 = 108$) or as $1/4$ of $1/27$ of the circle (i.e. $4 \times 27 = 108$). In Vedic astrology the navamsa sign is viewed from both of these perspectives.

The interweaving of a pattern of 12 signs within 9 zodiacs with a pattern of $1/4$ of the 27 nakshatras to identify the same "building block" of both the navamsa chart and the nakshatras is the kind of cosmic tapestry that the ancients saw as fundamental to the divine and cosmic design.

Many astrologers for the past 2,000 years excelled in mathematics as well as astrology. For example, Jerome Cardan, a gifted Italian of the 16th century, is noted in mathematical circles as the first person to publish the solution to cubic and quartic equations, and a pioneer in introducing probability theory. To astrologers, however, Cardan is a brilliant astrologer. Obviously, Cardan made important contributions in both mathematics and astrology. The intertwining of mathematical knowledge with astrology is critically important in the historical development of astrology.

REFLECTIONS USING DIFFERENT NUMBERS

The navamsa sign, being $1/12$ of the division of the sky into 9 zodiacs, presupposes the importance of both 9 and 12. As $1/4$ of the 27 sign zodiac we find that 4 and 27 are regarded as important. Of course, $27 = 9 \times 3$, or $3 \times 3 \times 3$, i.e. 3 cubed. The number 108 incorporates elements of both the "9-based" lunar zodiac (or, one might argue "3-based", because the number of nakshatra signs, 27, is also 3 cubed) and the "12-based" solar zodiac. It incorporates elements of both the Sun (yang) and the Moon (yin). It is a kind of marriage of the father (Sun) and the mother (Moon). Interestingly, in Vedic astrology the navamsa chart and nakshatras are used to pick suitable partners for marriage.

Like a Hindu image of many heads or arms, the cosmos is viewed as mirrored patterns that intertwine in a divine design. The navamsa sign is the pada, a step in the puzzle of the divine plan of which we are a part, and to which we can find our relationship through the astrology chart.

In my own astrological work I find that the navamsa chart shows where healing, community, a sense of wholeness and integration with our communities, can take place. The number 9 is a powerful component in the cosmic tapestry, and is a key to finding peace, wholeness, and a sense of belonging..

The insistence in some schools of modern western astrology to the use of the number 12 overlooks the important contribution of other geometric patterns which are vitally important. We lose much of the rich wisdom and knowledge of our ancestors, and we prevent astrology from evolving by myopically limiting the cosmos to "base-12". Ironically, the emphasis on "base-12" in astrology is sometimes touted as a means of recovering the ancient wisdom when, in fact, it results in a limited, barren form of astrology that leaves out important ingredients in the soul of men and women, and strips astrology of its richness and color.

The Number 5 and the Divine Lila:

Taking 108 steps around the zodiac, where each step is defined as a nakshatra sign (or pada) returns us back to the beginning, one complete cycle. Suppose, on the other hand, that we were to take 108 steps around the zodiac where each step is defined as one degree instead of a nakshatra sign of 3 deg 20 min. We will, of course, have traveled 108 degrees, which is equal to $\frac{3}{10}$ of a circle. At first glance, $\frac{3}{10}$ of a circle may not seem interesting, but in fact this angle of 108 degrees has interesting properties.

If one puts 5 zodiacs of 72 degrees around the circle, then 108 degrees is half-way through the second zodiac. In other words;



Take a circle and divide it into 5 equal pieces. Each piece is 72 degrees. 108 degrees is equal to $1 \frac{1}{2}$ pieces, i.e. $72 + 36 = 108$.



Another way of viewing 108 degrees is simply as $\frac{3}{10}$ of a circle. This aspect distance is considered to be a minor aspect by some modern astrologers, and is called the **tridecile** aspect.

The number $10 = 5 \times 2$, and factoring the number 10 to its constituent components of 5 and 2 is another way of expressing the fact that 108 degrees is $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cycles in the 5-based system of zodiacs of 72 degrees each.

Because 108 degrees is halfway through the 5-based zodiac, i.e. at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total length of the zodiac, the $\frac{3}{10}$ aspect incorporates the numbers 2 (as $\frac{1}{2}$ of the zodiac, which is equivalent

mathematically to factoring the number 10 as the numbers 5 and 2), 3 (the numerator), and 5 (also a factor of 10). The numbers 2, 3, and 5 are, the first 2 prime numbers and 2.

- In modern astrology, the number 2 is associated with polarity and relationships, and 3 is associated with ease and harmony. In my own astrological work I associate 5 (for example, the 1/5 and 2/5 aspects) with play and creativity. Using these interpretations combined with the this interpretation of 5, we can theorize that the 3/10 aspect gives graceful and harmonious (3) play and creativity (5) with others (2). In actual practice interpreting charts I have found this interpretation works well.

The 3/10 aspect is more basic and fundamental than astrologers who are trained to think strictly in a 12-fold system may realize. Consider, for example, that the 3/10 aspect has 10 in the denominator, a smaller number than the number 12. Therefore, the 1/10 aspect is based on a smaller division of the sky than the 1/12 (semisextile) and 5/12 (quincunx) aspects used in modern western astrology.

The disinclination of modern western astrologers to regard any fractions other than those based on twelfths of a circle stems from an ingrained "bias" to believe that astrology is based exclusively on a 12-based system. However, if we look at our hands, we see 5 fingers on each of 2 hands, not 6 fingers on each hand! One could impolitely say that astrologers who insist that astrology is restricted to only a 12-based morphology cannot see their hands in front of their face.

The combination of 5 and 2 is fundamental to our hands (fingers) and feet (toes) and to the cosmic geometry of life. The number 5 also has a relationship to other awesome geometric properties in that a 5-pointed star has ratios in the proportion of the golden mean, so the number 5 and the golden mean have a geometric relationship to each other.

The golden mean is also fundamental to the fibonacci series and the growth cycles of many living organisms. I recommend physicist **Mario Livio's book "The Golden Ratio"** to readers who want to explore the golden ratio further. The main point here is that there is a complex tapestry in life revealed in fascinating coincidences in which numbers and ratios appear in various contexts, repeating similar themes in a similar way to how themes can be repeated in a beautiful symphony. This unveiling of a cosmic tapestry and the fascinating patterns inherent in mathematics and life is not the interest solely of "lunatic astrologers" but is also beautifully described by profound and erudite scientists like Dr. Livio.

- **The number 108, therefore, is important in terms of nakshatras and the navamsa chart, and also is closely tied to the number 5 as well, being a basic aspect in the 5-based system of 5 zodiacs.**

There is more: In a 5-based system of 5 zodiacs of 72 degrees each, each zodiac sign has a length of 6 degrees. If one takes 108 steps, i.e. zodiac signs in a 5-based chart, then one has "traveled" 108 times 6 degrees, which = 648 degrees, which is equivalent to going around the zodiac once (360 degrees) plus an additional 288 degrees and 288 degrees is 72 degrees before returning back to conjunction. In other words, 108 steps in the 5-based system equals 9 zodiacs of 72 degrees, which is equal to a distance of 72 degrees! This coincidence is most extraordinary. Here again we see a relationship of 5 to 9, of creativity and play to wholeness and healing in the application of the number 108. That 108 steps in the 5-based chart returns us to the quintile aspect as it is called in modern astrology, i.e. $1/5$ of a circle, is a way of confirming that 108 is "consonant", so to speak, in the 5-based chart.

Another way in which 9 and 5 become intertwined is in the relationship of 40 and 9. The system of 9 consecutive zodiacs with each zodiac of 40 degrees in length is known as the navamsa chart in Vedic astrology. Obviously 9 and 40 are dependent on each other, so to speak, in that one can have 9 consecutive zodiacs if, and only if, one has each zodiac with a length of 40 degrees.

I refer to numbers that when multiplied produce the number 360 as inverse numbers. Inverse numbers are intimately related to each other. The number 40 equals 5 times 8. I refer to any number in the following progression of numbers as octave numbers, or more often has "octave harmonics": 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, etc.

The doubling of the frequency of a sound wave raises the sound by one octave, so that 440 cycles per second and 880 cycles per second are both the note A, and they are separated by one octave.

The octave harmonics, astrologically, in my opinion provide energy and drive without any strong coloration or tone quality. The number 40, therefore, is an octave of 5 because it equals 5 times an octave harmonic, and its essential quality is "**fiveness**". Therefore, the inverse numbers of 9 and 40 are fundamentally a relationship of 5 to 9. Although the derivation of this relationship of 5 and 9 via inverse numbers may seem extraordinarily cumbersome and far-fetched, it actually is very fundamental to the actual method that employ in interpreting astrology charts.

The idea that 40 has a fundamental 5 quality contained in it is as fundamental to an analysis of the birth chart using cosmic tapestry ("cosmic tapestry" is the term I use to describe this method of chart interpretation) as rising signs, rulerships, etc. are to many other astrologers. In short, this relationship between 5 and 9 via the inverse numbers of 40 and 9 is straightforward from the viewpoint of the astrological methodologies that I employ. These methodologies are based on a view of astrological influences functioning in an intricate interweaving of patterns.

The number 108 is similar to a note that finds itself comfortable in different keys. The note E for example is a major third in the key of C and it is the tonic in the key of E. In music, however, all musical notes are equal in that every note has "equal opportunity" to be the tonic or major 3rd in different keys. However, in the cosmic geometry that is created by dividing a circle in various ways some numbers have profoundly greater significance than other numbers. The number

108, for example, integrates qualities and influences of both 9 and 5 in an elegant way that no other number achieves in the same way.

- The number 108 is a key not only to healing and wholeness (9) as a key ingredient of the 9-based zodiac and nakshatras but also creativity and play (5) as an important number in the 5-based zodiac.

In Hinduism, Krishna, an incarnation of God, plays the flute, and the gopis dance. Vibrant colors are used in the depiction of the divine lila. The divine lila is the cosmic, playful dance of life. The divine lila is an expression of the cosmic influence of the number 5 because this is a playful dance, not a serious ritual. The feelings of wholeness, bonding, oneness, and peace are expressions of the influence of the number 9. The 108 gopis are engaged in a cosmic dance that incorporates the qualities of 5 and 9. There is also beauty and romance in this art, and beauty and romance are associated with the planet Venus by astrologers. Also noteworthy is that Venus stations (that is, turns retrograde or direct) at points approximately 216 degrees past the previous station, which is 144 degrees ($2/5$) measured directly in the shortest distance between the planets. Creativity and play leads to beauty, and the Venusian power of attracting us to beauty play prominently in Hindu art as well.

In Vedic astrology, dividing the sky into 9 zodiacs is the navamsa chart. The navamsa chart is so important that most Vedic astrologers must study your navamsa chart before they can evaluate your personality. Other charts are also used, such as the division of the sky into 7 zodiacs, which is the saptamsa chart. However, the navamsa chart is the most widely used of these additional charts, which are known as Vargas or divisional charts.

The division of the sky into 5 zodiacs of 72 degrees is not as popularly used as the saptamsa and navamsa charts, but the method is known. The numbers 5, 7, and 9, in the form of astrology which I practice, are the building blocks of the soul of the person. The 5-based chart is the play and creativity, 7 is the introspection and discipline, and 9 is sense of community, wholeness, and oneness. All 3 are required to have a healthy and vibrant human being. The number 108 has a fascinating relationship to two of these three numbers: 5 and 9. The intricate ways in which the numbers 5 and 9 intertwine within the number 108, as described above, reflects the awesome and beautiful dance of life. Krishna plays his flute while the 108 gopis dance, and the wheel of life turns, and the cosmic forces create the context in which the drama of our lives unfolds.

108 STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT

The number 12 is fundamental in astrology, and the number 12 shows up frequently in religious literature and mythology, such as the 12 disciples, 12 labors of Hercules, etc.

- Factoring the number 12 produces 3 times 4.

As mentioned above, 4 is an octave harmonic and indicates action, motivation, and drive, the fundamental yang force. Three is harmonizing according to astrologers; the trine aspect, 1/3 of the circle, harmonizes. Three is the fundamental yin force. Twelve is the basis of our lives in the fundamental experiences of our life as combinations of the yin and yang forces. The numbers 5, 7, and 9 provide color and depth to our lives, giving us creativity (5), introspection and discipline (7), and a sense of wholeness, healing, community, and oneness (9). These ideas were developed over years of consultations with clients based on seeking reliable information from the astrology charts of these clients. Studies of Vedic astrology and other areas of astrology, as well as research into mythology, mathematics, and other areas provided an enriching perspective and greater depth of understanding of these concepts.

As the number of wholeness, peace, fulfillment, and oneness, the number 9 is a key to achieving peace. Nine, although an odd number and therefore regarded as masculine in some numerological systems, is essentially a feminine number of wholeness and peace.

The Christian novena of 9 days prayer to Mary is appropriate. Nine is also a number of preparation and strengthening as wholeness is achieved. The 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert, and the 9 months of pregnancy are images that make sense in terms of the meaning of the number 9 in an astrological context. Note, also, that the meanings of numbers that I refer to in this article are based on astrological, geometric, and mathematical concepts and not on numerology. The significance of numbers according to numerologists are often different.

The navamsa chart is our chart of healing, dharma, peace, and wholeness (from my point of view, not necessarily the view of other astrologers). The 108 zodiac signs in the navamsa chart are similar to building blocks in an energy system that provides us wholeness and fulfillment. These 108 signs are the steps to our relationship to the Divine Mother, to our peace and contentment, and our sense of connectedness and bonding with our communities and families. One might say that when strife ends, the 108 steps have been completed.

In this article, I built a view of the number 108 that is based on ancient astrology, but is also expanded upon from the understanding of astrological influences that I gained through consultations with thousands of clients, an analysis of intricate astrological patterns in the charts of nearly all of these clients, as well as insights from mathematics. It is possible that some of the additional ideas presented in this article were already known to some of the ancients. As Hart de Feouw and other Vedic astrologers point out, Vedic astrology was transmitted primarily through an oral tradition, not written documents. Similarly, ancient western ideas were often passed down primarily through an oral tradition. We do not know how many ideas were never written down or were burned in the libraries in Alexandria, Baghdad and other places. Whether the new ideas presented in this article are really new or simply rediscoveries of what was once known is perhaps not as critically important as is the importance of further developing the wisdom that has largely been lost.

The most common way that these numbers are used in spiritual practices is to repeat a ritual the specified number of times. A novena that lasted for 8 days or 10 days is likely to feel uncomfortable to the person participating in the novena. This discomfort, I believe, stems not only habit and instilled beliefs, but also from a deep sense within the person that 9 days is better. Prayer beads with 108 beads incorporates the power of 108. The relationship of these numbers to religious rituals is also discussed below in the "Divination" section.

OTHER STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT

The number 108 is not the only valid number of steps to enlightenment.

The 12-based system used in much of astrology works very well especially in classical horary astrology, where the emphasis of the question is on what events (yang) and circumstances (yin) are involved.

There are 64 hexagrams in the I Ching, and this is a book of changes, quite literally, the dynamics of our lives, and an octave harmonic number seems to work well. As the number four cubed, the number 64 may have a kind of stability or finality to it, as opposed to 32 which equals 4 times 4 times two, or 128, which equals 4 times 4 times 4 times 2. The repetition of four in the factors of the number may make the numbers 16 and 64 particular important or fundamental octaves of one.

- Very interestingly, the "Tao Te Ching" by Lao Tzu, an extraordinary work of wisdom, has 81 small chapters. The number 81 equals 9 times 9, and again we see that squaring or cubing of numbers is used.
- The squaring of 9 seems to indicate a "hyper-peace" or ultimate fulfillment.
- The number 81 is a curious number also because it equals $80+1$, and 80 is two navamsa zodiacs, or, in other words, $2/9$ of a circle.

The 80 degree aspect in my opinion confers a gift for bringing peace with others because the number 2 in the numerator indicates sharing and polarity. The 80 degree aspect is a powerful peace-maker. The number 81 is equal to 9 squared, and is 1 degree past the peace making power of 80 degrees, a curious numerological phenomenon.

In the study of geometry and mathematics one finds many curious phenomena, such as in the many ways that the golden ratio appears in seemingly unrelated contexts from 5-pointed stars, to the fibonacci series, to the growth of some living things. It is unlikely that a work as brilliant as the Tao Te Ching has an arbitrary number of brief chapters. We may never know what Lao Tzu's reason for 81 chapters is, but my hypothesis is that nine squared as an appropriate number for a full cycle, given the relationship of 9 to wholeness astrologically, is likely. I also suspect that Lao Tzu would not see 81 as the only possible number of chapters and other numbers would work well too, and he probably simply found the book auspiciously felt complete

and right with 81 sections completed. I am speculating and research on the history and development of the Tao Te Ching would be most interesting.

The number 108 is special in some ways. Other numbers are special in other ways. There are many pathways to enlightenment.

THE COSMIC TAPESTRY

By removing the shackles of viewing astrology from only a 12-based perspective, we can see the rich complexity and awesome patterns that were understood by many ancient astrologers, and we can see the close connections of astrology with geometry, and why many astrologers were mathematicians as well as mystics.

In Vedic culture, yoga exercises, meditation, proper food, music, astrology, and healing all worked with a view to understanding our relationship to the larger design and fabric of our lives. The insights that ancient astrologers in both the East and West developed reveal the repeating cycles that are interwoven. These repeating patterns can also be seen as cycles, periods, or waves, and the development of harmonic astrology by John Addey in the 20th century rephrases what previously had been viewed as a beautiful interconnecting fabric as waves. Both metaphors, cosmic tapestry and waves, are equally applicable and work. Geometry is sacred because the coincidences are staggering.

How Venus cycles form pentagrams, planets travel in ellipses, and the golden mean appears in seemingly completely different and disparate contexts, makes one feel a great awe and wonder at how our world could have been fashioned or could have evolved in such intricate and extraordinary ways.

Our universe is a cosmic tapestry; it is also a sea of electromagnetic waves which our 5 senses interpret in various ways. By studying this cosmic tapestry we not only enter a fascinating world of sacred geometry, but also a system of knowledge that can help us in practical ways to better understand our own needs, desires, drives, conflicts, hopes, and dreams as we uncover our place in the exquisitely intricate and beautiful tapestry of our lives.

ENRICHING OUR RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES AND APPRECIATION OF CULTURE

In Hinduism we find a confluence of beliefs, geometry, astrology, philosophy, art, and science, in a grand vision. A life style and culture evolved that integrates this understanding in a fulfilling way. Culture does not develop simply out of morals, ethics, habits, and adaptations to an environment. Culture also develops from a rich integration of many levels of comprehension, attunement, and sensitivity.

People cling to cultural traditions not only from pride or tribalism, but because of a deep sense within their souls that something very precious and dear has developed and evolved in these traditions, and often in ways unfathomable to our conscious minds. All of us would do well to

work towards preserving and further developing the various cultural traditions, and also allowing them to inspire one another.

Cultural traditions and religions can also sustain negative, unhealthy, and dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors. It is common in India and some middle eastern countries for people to follow the indications of astrology almost blindly, marrying whomever the astrology tells them to marry, and conducting their affairs in accordance with the astrological indication. The supposition that the astrological interpretation is so vastly more accurate than the person's own feelings, thoughts, and desires is hubris on the part of the astrologer. This tradition is not a viable one for future generations because people all over the world are developing a greater sense of their own empowerment and ability to make decisions for themselves.

Since about the middle of the 20th century there has been a strong movement in western astrology to free the practice of astrology from this fatalistic and dogmatic attitude, and to use astrology to empower people to make better decisions rather than to dictate what a person should do and what the future is. This movement to self-empowerment rather than a fatalistic or dogmatic prognostications is vitally important, and it can help restore the beauty and grandeur of astrology as it removes the negative impact of the over-ossified rules that constrain and limit people rather than empower them. We must, in fact, question whether astrology has objective validity at all or whether astrology is a beautiful scheme projected on the celestial sphere but having no actual relationship to the firmament on which they are projected. My own views on the validity and relevance of astrology are given at the end of this article.

As an American and a citizen of one of the most powerful nations on our planet, and a nation whose culture is spreading around the globe, it is important that we Americans realize that the cultural traditions of other nations must be preserved and enhanced, and allowed to blossom in their own way. The conflicts in the Middle East are evidence of how attachment to cultural traditions is, fortunately, almost impossible to destroy. The Muslims and the Jews must be assisted in developing their own unique life styles, while learning to appreciate and respect one another.

A greater appreciation of the 108 steps to enlightenment that are dear to Hindus demonstrates the wisdom of this culture. If we are Christians or immersed in some other religious or cultural experience, we need not adapt or change what we do. We need not all become doctors because modern medicine makes discoveries, and we need not become astronomers because a new planet is discovered. We can and we should appreciate the discovery. We can and we should appreciate the 108 steps to enlightenment and we can and we should develop a greater love and appreciation for those who tread this path. We can and we should continue with our own path and our own heritage that is dear to us.

DIVINATION

During the process of divination, whether it be with the I Ching, Tarot cards, or other medium, there is an enactment of the powerful geometric-cosmological patterns that influence our lives,

and the divinatory ritual appears to bring an attunement to these principles, as if we have tapped into a Platonic truth that exists behind the ephemeral manifestations of reality that we see in our lives. The I Ching and other divinatory methods seem to work because of this attunement to underlying realities. Even astrology may work primarily, or even completely, through this kind of universal sympathy that occurs in mapping out the cosmos on paper. The I Ching and astrology may have no validity without the participation of the diviner, and therefore not be scientific and yet contain a truth and validity of their own. This is a view held by some modern astrologers.

As skeptics of astrology, like Geoffrey Dean and Rudolf Smit, assert, it may also be the case that astrology involves a great amount of illusions similar to what we experience in a magic show where we believe we see a woman cut in half but in fact we are seeing only an optical illusion. In the book "Astrology in the Year Zero" by Garry Phillipson, Geoffrey Dean presents a very powerful argument of the ways in which astrologers fool themselves. Scientists like Mario Livio, who have found "magic" in science are also likely to see that astrologers have deluded themselves by mistaking what is true symbolically or mathematically and projected these truths onto the astrology chart.

The evidence to date supports the viewpoint of astrologers like Patrick Curry and Geoffrey Cornelius who see astrology primarily as a form of divination OR the viewpoint of the skeptics. There is not yet sufficiently powerful validation of astrology to demonstrate that astrology has actual objective validity. My own view is that astrology does have objective validity as well, and the awakening of astrologers to a more comprehensive, sophisticated, and intricate view of how astrological influences work is necessary for astrology to advance to this next level. One of the miracles of life is that truths exist simultaneously at many levels, including the tangible.

Note also that the sympathies set up in divination also occur in rituals. We already mentioned, for example, the novena to Mary. Also board games and sports of all kinds are rituals that enact great cosmic forces in microcosms, just as rituals do. The mania that sports enthusiasts around the world experience, and the long history of enthusiastic participation in sports and the human interest in being spectators of sports is fueled by the sensitivity of the human soul to these ongoing, eternal truths of cosmology, cosmic forces, cosmic tapestry, and the myths and legends that are engendered.

Beautiful Symbolism Or Actual Cosmic Influences: The Question of Our Times!

Whether astrology has objective validity is a crucial question of our times.

When Kepler discovered the laws of planetary motion, he made a giant step forward in the evolution of human thought. He found that a perfect geometric shape, the ellipse, existed not only in the realm of pure thought and Platonic pure models, but also that this pure and pristine concept was the basis for the movement of the cosmos. Kepler married Platonic idealism with the real world. Our understanding of the universe has never been the same since Kepler's discovery.

The breakthroughs of physics and mathematics in the 20th century revealed a universe far more complex and intricate than had been imagined in the 19th century. Now in the 21st century we face the question of what relevance, what truth, and what relationship do areas like astrology have to the rest of human thought and understanding. The issue is not settled yet. Whether astrology is illusion and delusion, divination, science, or a bit of all of these is not yet resolved in that educated and intelligent people disagree with one another on this issue. Critically important is ongoing research to settle the issue.

Also critically important, in my opinion, is utilization of more sophisticated approaches to astrology, an approach that embraces the entire cosmic tapestry, that humbly realizes that we are attempting to unravel a system of influences most likely more complex than any studied before, and a willingness to let the tenants of astrology evolve to the next level. Astrologers appear, on the whole, to be hesitant to take this step. The tendency is to revive ancient ideas without a view to the interweaving tapestry at work, or to function with the tools that provide whatever useful information for psychological insight are useful, without the bravery needed to forge ahead into unraveling the patterns at work that enable the dance of life and the 108 gopis to rejoice.

THE FUTURE OF ASTROLOGY

I believe that the future of astrology lies in the unraveling of an intricate cosmic tapestry that astrology to date has only glimpsed the bare outlines of. This belief is founded on the anecdotal evidence of many chart interpretation and research studies. Astrology is like a seed that is just beginning to sprout, and the full blossoming will eventually produce a form of astrology that is capable of functioning in an objective manner. We can see in this article how the advancement of astrological theory also integrates issues in religion, science, and mythology into a coherent and unified system. The development of a more coherent and unified system of ideas is not surprising because in the hard sciences like physics and biology, there is an ongoing movement towards integration. Superstring theory, for example, is a current attempt in physics to develop the next level of integration of ideas into a grand oneness, and this effort is built upon the stunning success of electromagnetic theory, relativity, and quantum theory in producing a unified vision of universal laws and universal forces.