

CHAPTER 6: FROM CANCER TO LEO

PART 1: CROSSING LEO'S CUSP & "STRENGTH"

In our essay, "Centroverson: Jung's omission" (see 'basics' webpage), we saw that '5 Leo' is in pole position to "integrate" 2/3rds of the zodiac, the extraverted '1-2-3-4 sequence' & the centrovverted '(5)-6-7-8 sequence'. This makes sense insofar as the Lion is both the epitome of, (i) '1-2-3-4 hunting', & (ii) (with the 5th house's expression, "romance") the first phase of '5-6-7-8 mating'. For the FA-er, "romance" means being creative with endogamous libido such that one's exogamous libido can flower. In short, Freud's 5th "latent phase" isn't very "latent". Rather, it is a phase of re-birth...

The anti-clockwise shifts from water to fire – '12'-to-'1', '4'-to-'5', '8'-to-'9' – can all be characterized as 'birth-like', even if many astrologers would restrict birth, per se, to '12'-to-'1'. As a result, the FA-er would put forward the cliché, "born again", for the '4'-to-'5' transition because, when the infant begins to encounter his/her "inner child" out of (if not an ocean, then) a tidal pool of emotional ambivalences, s/he will have intuitions that s/he is the throes of a re-birth. In this '4'-to-'5' scenario, however, the child won't be flummoxed by the 'broadening-yet-narrowing paradox' (see 'Ch.2') that s/he had earlier faced at his/her '12'-to-'1'. Meanwhile, back at the (sky)-ranch...

The two weeks between the full Moon in Capricorn (Sun in Cancer) & the new Moon in/near Leo is one of FA's recommended timespans for reviewing the shift from "repression" to "sublimation" because, as the Sun heats up its creative dealings with '4 Cancerian' emotional ambivalences, the '4 Moon' "reflects" the 4th quadrant (back-down) to this vitalizing '5 Sun'. Returning to "repression", our longstanding readers know that we are not 100% negative about it because, if the ego is yet to be sufficiently formed (= all infants; adults who develop one or two ego-functions at serious expense of their opposite ego-functions e.g. negating-reducing scientists), "repression" (e.g. "I can't accept what you are proposing... even if I am unable to coherently tell you why") needs to be taken as serving a legitimate psychological "teleos" until proven otherwise. In prior essays, we had used the superego metaphor of strengthening the trees to which Tarzan's (perhaps, now our attention is shifting to the Moon, Jane's) heroic vines are attached. First up, then, the psychoanalyst "resists" temptations to 'use forceps' on a '1st-2nd trimester analysand' lest, by 'releasing' too much ('12' ±) '11', the analysand becomes too much the "(addicted) mad scientist". In other words, the psychoanalyst waits another ("progressed") week for the Moon to enter the 1st personal 1st quadrant, wherein the analysand, once again, is encouraged to engage his/her 'Sherlock Holmes 3 archetype' and, with it, "self-reflect" on his/her "emotional facts". If so, both analyst & analysand will have developed some intuitive "Strength". Hereupon, we return to...

First printed in 1909, the Rider-Waite tarot deck was a relatively late inclusion in the tarot's 500yrs+ history. What this deck loses in longevity, however, it makes up in influence... it is the best seller. With its designers being influenced by anti-clockwise astrology, they swapped the locations of "Justice" & "Strength" so that the sequence of the tarot would match that of the zodiac. These best-seller & astrological-sympathy aspects of this deck 'sealed' FA's aim to reference this deck 'on both sides'. Although the "Strength" image points most obviously to Leo, we can also note the continuity of feminine Cancer running up-into masculine Leo being symbolized by the femininity of the lion-tamer. Even FA's recently acquired readers will be aware of the importance

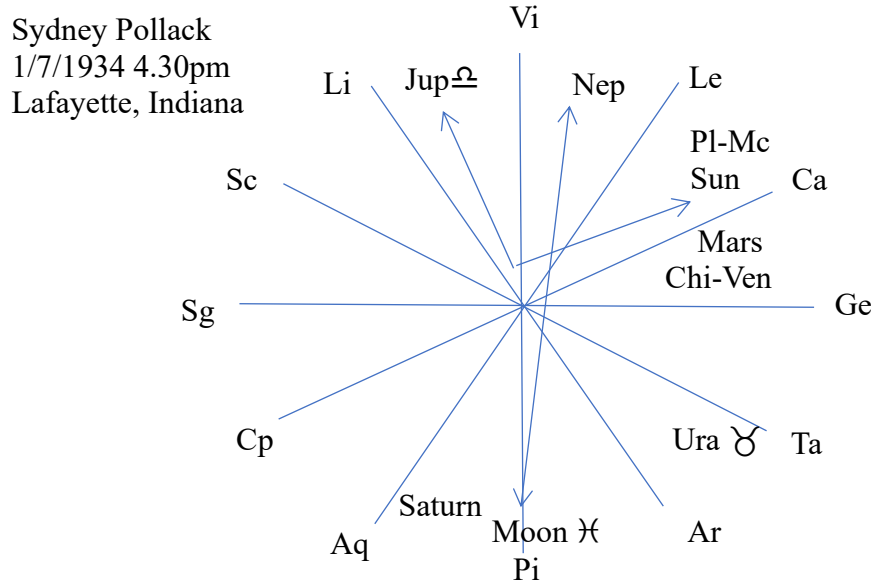
that we place on '4''s expressions as the individual steps in/up to the "individuation" task of 'taming' his/her '5 Sun' and, thereafter, steps up (again) into a fully developed, 4-functioned "centroversion". The 3 additional "cardinal virtues", "self-sufficiency (= the Hermit), "Justice" and "Temperance" will be subjects of upcoming mini-essays.

Although the individual develops the capacity to differentiate "repression" and "suppression" in the mental-verbal sense ('back') at Gemini, s/he won't really be able to experience this difference until s/he has received either (i) well-balanced parenting during his/her infancy-into-childhood (not very common these 21stC days) or, later as an adult, (ii) psychoanalysis. As far as the purely verbal differentiations go, things are straightforward insofar as emotions that are "aware/conscious" (longstanding readers will know why we compound this term) can be 'worked on'. Even if "transformation", "sublimation" &/or "integration" of these "suppressed" emotions might take a while, the Cancer-to-Leo child-(analysand) can be confident that s/he will gain the skills to use them in his/her foreseeable future. The fact that the sky behind the 'lion-tamer' is filled with gold colour symbolizes the confidence of the post-infancy phase... although, in solving one problem, a new problem arises: the human figure is no longer shielded from the Sun's light symbolizing the risk of a troubled "identification" with his/her '5 talent'. As noted at the outset, this trouble is mythologically expressed with Icarus.

For Freud, the "repression-suppression" differentiation was important insofar as some of his critics had incorrectly claimed that his treatment involved encouraging analysands to "act out" their "repressed" desires. These critics weren't very attentive, however... Freud was clear that, because "repressed" desires couldn't be 'worked on', the analysand had to develop his/her "suppressive" mechanisms to the point that when the "unconscious was made conscious" there would be minimal "acting out". For FA, it is no great surprise to discover that Freud's Sun was progressing through Cancer and running up to the Cancer-Leo cusp during the time that he composed his essays on analytic technique. Freud's critics also had the incorrect idea that psychoanalysis is disrespectful of "resistances" insofar as they try to batter them down... here again, however, Freud was clear that any attempt to batter down a "resistance" will have an effect opposite to the one intended. In other words, the existence of a "resistance" is a sign that the "suppression" mechanism hasn't been sufficiently developed and, instead of "making the unconscious conscious", the analyst works more on the emotions that have already been experienced in the "(merely)-aware" psyche. A myth that could be linked to the psychoanalyst's technique is "Androcles & the Lion" – the story about a 'lion-tamer' who pulled a thorn from a lion's foot to, later, find that his compassionate act would be 'remembered' – because it lays out (i) the key role that memory plays in the healing process, (ii) in order not to eat his prey, the lion must have developed, to some extent, its "suppressive" capacity, and (iii) the faith that both the psychoanalyst & analysand need to have to allow plenty of time to pass before insisting on answers.

At this point, we might add that Freud was (not only aware, but also) conscious that an emotion is less likely to undergo "repression" than any ideas that swirl around the emotion. Indeed, for a while, Freud theorized that emotions aren't "repressed" at all but, in the longer run, he began to adjust this view e.g. "unconscious sense of guilt", one of the most inaccessible emotions. In turn, he would back off from being dogmatic about what is "in" the unconscious. And, so, to our Sun-in-Cancer example...

EXAMPLE EGO-DYNAMICS XI: SYDNEY POLLACK



From the prior discussion, we hope that our readers have reached the point of agreeing with FA that, in light of ‘5’s ‘Icarus risk’, a natal Sun in Cancer may be less risky than a Sun in Leo. The trouble is, of course, that a Sun in Cancer will “progress” into Leo sometime during one’s youth and, so, a Sun in Cancer is still a relatively risky placement. Then again, at some stage during this youthful “progression”, the Sun-in-Cancer individual’s “Sun-ruler”, the Moon, will be rolling up to Capricorn-Aquarius to, thereby, provide a useful “reflection” back-down to the risk. In Sydney Pollack’s case, we notice that the “progression” of his Sun-ruler rolled into Capricorn-Aquarius in his mid-20s, a more “reflective” time of life than, say, rebellious teenage. Moreover, with Sydney’s Capricorn sector being couched in his 1st personal 1st quadrant, he may have understood the value of applying ‘10 discipline’ to his 1st (not his 2nd, nor his 3rd) personal sphere of attention. “Self-valuing reflections” to the 2nd house have the effect of supporting whatever develops in the ‘pre-ego formational’ 3rd house. And, so...

Although we don’t find any planets in the sign of the Lion in the natal chart of the director of the lion-themed, “Out of Africa”, we do find that, during the years that he developed the project, Sydney Pollack’s Sun was “progressing” through the sign of the Lion. Moreover, Sydney’s Moon & ‘Sun-huggers’, Mercury-Venus, “progressed” into Leo in the years of his successes with Sun in Leo actor-director, Robert Redford. (To be sure, Robert did star in one of Sydney’s 1960s Tennessee Williams’ adaptations, “This Property is Condemned”, but it never came near the box offices of 1970s films, “The Way We Were”, “Three Days of the Condor” & “The Electric Horseman”).

With Sagittarius on the ascendant and, therefore, with the chart-ruler, Jupiter, in Libra in the 10th house square the Sun in Cancer in the 8th house, it isn’t especially surprising that his life would be an outwardly successful one. If, however, we chart an anti-clockwise course from Sydney’s ascendant, we do notice that the first planetary archetype we meet is Saturn in Aquarius in the 3rd house. Because he seemed to take his 3rd house seriously – he had studied dialogue techniques well enough that it would

land him a dialogue coach gig in Hollywood – Saturn would not become the “malefic” that it could have become in a less disciplined soul. With Sydney’s Moon in Pisces on the I.C. opposite Neptune applying to his M.C. we notice some of the romantic longing for a stable home that led him to ‘resonate’ with Karen Blixen (using the pseudonym, Isak Dinesen), the author of “Out of Africa”... in epic movie terms, another in the list of ‘Europeans-seeking-adventure’ genre that, although hitting a peak with “Lawrence of Arabia” (1962), still had plenty of juice insofar as it gave (still gives!) Europeans a chance to get a taste of exotic locations without having to deal with their nitty gritty.

One of the most resonant scenes in “Out of Africa” in relation to “Lawrence of Arabia” is the scene wherein “Karen” (Meryl Streep) and her servants watch, from a distance yet with some trepidation, a tribe of Maasi running through the savannah. Instead of shooting the servants (as with Omar Sharif in “Lawrence of...”), the Maasi have more important fish to fry. Later, “Dennis” (Robert Redford) explains to Karen that the Maasi live in the moment and, therefore, if they were imprisoned, they would die because they are unable to imagine a future point of being released. By this point in the narrative, it is easy for the audience to realize that Dennis is talking of himself. American Dennis can also be taken as the “personification” of the U.S.A.’s (pre-1917) isolationist policy that kept it ‘airily’ clear of WWI, whereas Dane Karen personifies the need not to take sides... having invested in African ‘earth’, Karen rightly worries that, whomever wins the war, she might lose her farm for earlier having taken one.

The irony of Karen’s political nous is that it doesn’t have much to do with her “fate” (her servant wakes her with the words, “God is coming”). Her coffee farm is consumed by fire in a not dissimilar way that her romance is consumed by insufficient differentiation of her animus. (Spoiler alert) Dennis, over-doing the “puer aeternus”, dies in a plane crash. In the fireside dialogue that leads to their split, we notice a lack of creativity in face of the feminine-masculine split – Dennis may be a Leo, but there is a strong Aquarian feel to his declaration of (principles of) independence and Karen may be a Taurus (Aries actually, scroll down), but her farming bug betrays plenty of earthy sentiment – and, therefore, we begin to wonder to what extent the tribulations are messages from their respective “Selves” to consider the tactics with which they are defending their arguments. Because Sydney is a Sun in Cancer, he feels the importance of this scene and, if an analyst had commented to him that the romancers might have got through their impasse if they had learned more about the shift from endogamy to exogamy, Sydney would have ‘got’ the comment... although, in ‘getting’ so, he would have lamented that depicting it would, in all likelihood, hurt the narrative-dramatic payoff and, therefore, he would have to forget about sweeping the Oscars.

Rolling up from Sydney’s I.C. into his 5th house, we could claim that, not unlike Dennis, Sydney has to deal with ‘5-11 tension’ (Uranus in Taurus), but it doesn’t seem to have been disruptive enough to prevent him from (at least, in part) ‘owning’ his ‘4-5 Cancer-Sun’ in his 8th house, the house that (at least, in part) ‘demands’ a thorough self-investigation of the degree to which one is “identified” with something (a partner, an idea, a body or, that usual suspect of the 8th house, a bank balance) in a way that is blocking further “soul growth”. It is not astrologically uninteresting that Sydney went “back into Africa” with his final film, “The Interpreter”. Africa, for Sydney, seems to have been the continent that spoke most loudly about “identification with power”.

SYDNEY POLLACK'S (PSCYHOLOGICAL) TOP 5

Faustian bargains come thick & fast in Sydney's better films... even in the 3rd film, a comedy, listed below, the (anti)-hero bargains with his inner "other half"...

1: OUT OF AFRICA (1985) 🌟🌟🌟

Sydney's natal horoscope is very different to Karen Blixen's, but they share an emphasis in the 3rd quadrant... Karen's Sun-Venus in Aries & Mercury in Taurus are in her 8th house. That Sydney had only Neptune in the 9th house (against Karen having Neptune, Moon-Pluto & Saturn in hers) is, in large part, why Sydney told Karen's tale rather than Karen telling a tale of a Sydney-like artist who is keen to capture Africa's beauty with a sweeping John Barry score. If, one day, you find yourself being charged by a '5 lion' and you defend yourself with '11 technology', you might be advised by a Jungian that you will need to atone for your temporary overturning of nature's order.

2: THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY? (1969) 🌟🌟🌟

The general idea of this Depression-era tale is that, if capitalism "reduces" men to animals, then it is but a short step to shooting those who aren't contributing. Then again, we can expand to the question: why are we breeding horses that have a greater propensity to break their legs (there is little need to shoot wild horses as their legs are better adapted)? Fairy tales often pivot on the sacrifice of the hero's "helpful animal" but, in also such tales, the hero will have already "integrated" the animal's wildness.

3. TOOTSIE (1982) 🌟🌟

This is the kind of movie that forces a depth psychologist, especially a Jungian depth psychologist, to remind the gender-sensitive individual that things are not quite what they seem. The irksome out-of-work actor, "Michael Dorsey" (Dustin Hoffman), might be exploring his "feminine side" but, Jungianly, all that is happening is that he is exploring the masculine "animus" that features the knack of "possessing" a woman (Tootsie was a Thatcher contemporary) to the point of making her a male caricature.

4: THE FIRM (1993) 🌟🌟

FA's longstanding readers know of our propensity to combine prepositions to emphasize rotational motion around the zodiac e.g. 'down-across-up-into'. It may not, therefore, come as much of a surprise that we 'like' the distinction that Faustian-pact-signing lawyer "Mitch McDeere" (Tom Cruise), makes between getting out and going through insofar as it implies the Buddha-like "middle way". This way is the 'true' way for the "individuator" to deal successfully with transits/"progressions" involving '8'.

5: THE INTERPRETER (2005) 🌟🌟

One gets the feeling that, looking back on his greatest success from his twilight years, Sydney was unhappy that he focused so much on the romance aspects of "Out of Africa" that he killed a good opportunity to comment more deeply on the European colonization of the world and its immediate & distant effects. In 2005, of course, the hot topic was the impotence of the U.N. This topic will fade, however, when "weapons of mass destruction" become so cheap that even Robinson Crusoe can afford one.

CH.6 (cont.) FROM CANCER TO LEO

PART II: REFLECTING ON LEO'S CUSP & "THE SUN"

On 1/8/2023, the Moon will become full in Aquarius, a semi-circumstance that, although subtly different to a full Moon in Capricorn, is also significantly different to a full Moon in Capricorn insofar as it offers astrologers a chance to rejoice in the fact of the tricky, eccentric-making, extra-human arc of Aquarius being imbued with the feminine intra-humanity of the Moon... itself underpinned by a 'doubly centroverted' '5-5 Sun in Leo'. It is our view that astrologers need to rejoice in any aspect that brings humanity back into the frame, not the least because astrology, ruled (in large part) by the ruler of Aquarius, Uranus, is ever at risk of spiraling out into 'extra-humanizing' sterility. Yes, we also 'like' a full Moon in Leo (= a Sun in Aquarius, often accompanied by Mercury &/or Venus in Aquarius), but we do 'like' the full Moon in Aquarius more insofar as it only takes two or three days for the Moon to recommence its journey into the lower hemisphere, adding a new layer of incarnation for the individual's "soul".

This idea carries us back to our notes on the question: is there only one planet, Mercury, that "rules" astrology? The answer, "(probably) no", sources to the planet that speaks to macro-scalar patterning, Uranus, having every right to "rule" the study of the symbolic stars. Then again, the fact that the Sun-Earth axis 'draws' the tropical zodiac used in the West means that Sun can stake a "rulership" claim. The Moon also has a claim insofar as the 12-spoked division of the zodiac sources to its 12 cycles/year. Insofar as Uranus "rules" Aquarius – earthy Saturn was never a comfortable 'fit' for "rulership" of airy Aquarius – we can see signs (not only planets) having a "rulership" claim... hence, the "Age of Aquarius" could be an astrological age. We don't need to stop here either... with Uranus' pairing to Neptune, perhaps the god of the oceans has its claim (recall, here, that '11' only provides the pattern; '12' has the task of inserting "qualia" into the pattern). Although Pluto doesn't have much to say about large-scale patterning or "qualia", if there's a "ruler" of the 'depth psychologization' of astrology, then he is it. The popularity of the self-help book, "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus", gives these planets a claim. This debate, no doubt, is never going to end. Never mind, let's go back to the Sun-Moon's highlighting of the Leo-Aquarius axis...

Another reason to 'like' a full Moon in Aquarius is that it brings together '4's time-cycle and '11-(12)'s space-(time) stasis. In other words, there is a sense in which '4-(5)-11' speaks the value of looking for the psychological developmental aspect of Uranus-ruled phenomena such as large-scale science (= cosmology) and astrology. Or, to put it in blunter terms... in the same way that it is very often the case that one spots a prominent '11' in the natal chart of your local "mad scientist", so it is often the case that one spots prominent expressions of '11' (prominent enough to threaten Lunar-Solar development) in the natal chart of your local "mad astrologer".

Simply put, 'astrological madness' increases to the degree that, irrespective of his/her experience (experience just as easily entrenches a problem as heals a problem), the astrologer is "identified with/possessed by" the raw archetypal realm. (Therefore, we state here that '12' is an equal threat). As is usually our case, FA begins by applying Freud's term, "connected series", insofar as we would not claim that this section of astrologers is mad and that section of astrologers is sane. Rather, it is usually a case of a particular astrologer becoming mad about a particularity of astrology that "splits"

him/her from the hermeneutic processes of anti-clockwise, developmental “wholing”. For example, s/he may see an upcoming transit and make an out-of-context concrete prediction that, if the prediction turns out to be accurate, makes things worse for the growth of his/her “soul”. To re-cap, no-one is here to show others how clever s/he is... we are here to access our free-willed “soul lessons” from the inside of a soma enriched by repeated transits of the ego-builders through the lower hemisphere. Yet...

Let's not, in any case, get too carried away with the potential madness of (what can be called) “concretistic cookbook astrology”. However crazy this astrological art becomes, we would not go so far as claim that it is crazier than a crazy science because, unlike scientists, astrologers are unable to avoid the feeling function... every time an astrologer browses a horoscope, perhaps dozens of times a day, s/he is reminded that feeling has its equal share (‘astrology’s profound irony’). By contrast, a crazy scientist either “denies” the equality of feeling or, more terminally, “denies” feeling’s existence. Because it is underpinned by ‘5-5 centrality’, the full Moon in Aquarius is well able to conceive itself as a ‘feeling boat’ that has the capacity to successfully cross ‘12’s ocean.

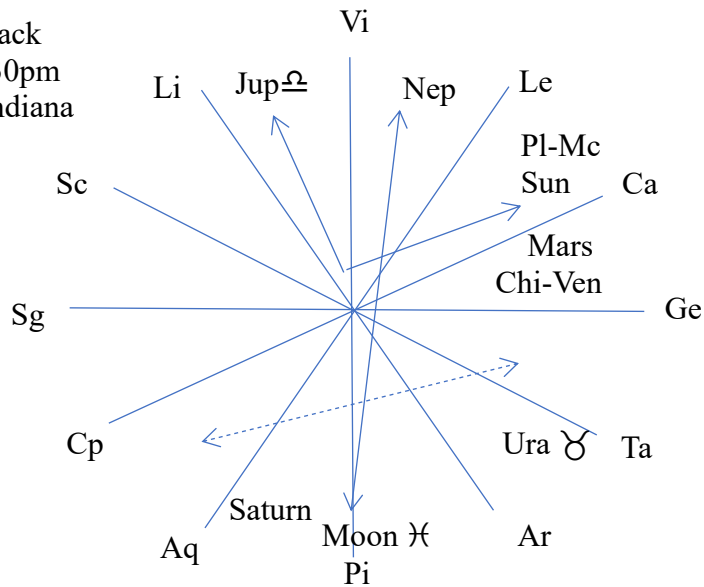
These kinds of considerations, if temporarily, allow us to bring the tarot’s 19th card, “the Sun”, forward to a position that precedes “the Hermit”. As the Moon rolls through its waning cycle back to the new Moon near the cusp of Virgo, the individual has an opportunity to enjoy ‘5’s ‘doubled’ epistemological potential that we discussed at the top of this chapter i.e. “quintessential” intuitive “integration” of ‘2-3-4’ along with a sense of where ‘2-3-4-5’ is going... to ‘6-7-(8-9)’. The reason that we placed ‘8’ & ‘9’ in brackets is that, by mid-to-late autumn, the Sun has begun to fade and, rather than revel in childhood creativity, the focus needs to shift to the potential creativity of unborn generations. Hence the image of the Sun shows a child on a horse... although the horse seems to have been “broken in”, we still get a sense of Sagittarius’ animal (= reincarnating, not transcending) aspect. To be able to transcend the zodiac round, the individual needs to ‘live out’ ‘6-7-8’. If, alternatively, the child stays in his/her creative garden (who will blame him/her?), s/he will likely discover that further reincarnations are required before transcendence is ‘granted’. As we learn from Joseph Campbell, in addition to “refusal of call”, the would-be hero also confronts “refusal of return”.

“The Sun” tarot image is not the first of the major arcana to feature the Sun. From ‘Ch.1’, readers can recall our notes on the ‘albedo Sun’ of “the Fool” and, from ‘Ch.4’, readers can recall our notes on the ‘golden-but-blocked Sun’ of “the Lovers”. “The Sun” distinguishes itself from these earlier images in two ways (i) the depiction of a face in the Sun, & (ii) the rays of this Solar image don’t blot out the blue sky. For FA, these distinctions point to the increasing 1st personal-ness & live-and-let-live-ness of the “individuating” process. If the individual has accessed his/her expressions of ‘5’ in a mature way, s/he won’t waste his/her libido indulging competitiveness and envy...

Melanie Klein ‘paired’ envy with gratitude, meaning that she went beyond our ‘live-and-let-live’ description to ‘live-and-feed-others’-growth’. This ‘feeding’ begins at the mother’s “good breast”. The Kleinian analyst, in offering a metaphoric “good breast” to the analysand, having the task of enduring “negation” of something “good”, needs a long training analysis in order to ‘doubly internalize’ his/her “good breast”. Having done so, s/he can deal with the earliest phase of infancy. The Freudastrologer goes even further than Melanie... s/he ‘doubly internalizes’ his/her “good womb”.

EXAMPLE EGO-DYNAMICS XII: SIDNEY LUMET

Sydney Pollack
1/7/1934 4.30pm
Lafayette, Indiana



Sidney Lumet's directing career began with a bang – “12 Angry Men” might be stage-bound, but not so much to preclude film-ization – and, more or less, through most of its subsequent five decades, matched his self-set standard. In line with Sidney's natal Sun (widely) conjunct Venus-(closely)-conjunct-Pluto in Cancer, he would round out his directing career with the knottiest of family romantic betray-a-thons, “Before the Devil Knows You're Dead” (2007; soon after his Solar “progression” through natal Uranus-square-Mercury). Indeed, for FA, one of Sidney's other family betray-a-thons, “Running of Empty” (1988), is our favourite, not the least because the psyche of each family member ‘grows’ at different speeds and, therefore, the plot provides enough psychoanalytic grist to power a dozen interpretative hermeneutic mills...

‘Lovers-on-the-lam’ movies are a dime a dozen. Much thinner on the ground, however, are ‘nuclear-family-on-the-lam’ movies. In “Running on Empty” the father, “Arthur Pope” (Judd Hirsch), and the mother, “Annie Pope” (Christine Lahti), were rebellious, Vietnam war era youths who had gotten in too deep with one of the more destructive anti-war groups and taken part in a destruction of a napalm factory that led to grievous bodily harm of a guard. They had the chance to give themselves up but the Cancerian urge to keep the nuclear family together was too strong... so they took off with their infant son, “Danny” (River Phoenix), resolving to fake their identities so that they could enroll Danny (and, later, their 2nd son, Harry) in school.

In order to “rationalize” their political misadventure, the Popes see themselves as having been careless more than deliberate. They saw Vietnam as a deliberate action by a U.S.A. that had become fearful of socialist dominoes. Still, they could have looked closer at carelessness in a more general sense and, then, considered the possibility that it was part of their parenting. The irony of Arthur is that he has proved himself to be uber-careful in being to evade the F.B.I., so if a psychologist were to ask him about the care that he is taking as a parent, s/he would almost certainly be greeted with the most emphatic “paranoid schizoid positional” negation. The trouble for Arthur is that it is

too easy to see careless irresponsibility around him – Annie has a flirtation with a gun-toting old boyfriend – sights that would have the effect of bolstering his self-conception as the “responsible, thoughtful one”. And, with Annie’s flirtation demonstrating that she is fed up with Arthur’s “care”, we understand that Arthur’s clinging to Danny is a “compensation” that vaults him into a pretense of family unity that is covering over the awful truth that it is high time for one-sided Cancerian endogamy to be surpassed by Libra’s-Scorpio’s exogamous (re)-balances. No surprises, then, that Danny’s sexual maturation puts all this into Venus-Pluto’s (dark) fire, personified in his love interest, “Lorna” (Martha Plimpton), playing Euridyce to Danny’s Orpheus.

Lorna may be a blonde and Annie may be a brunette, but you don’t have to be the greatest Freudian to see the parallel between the two women in Danny’s life... for starters, both have/had to deal with conservative fathers with whom they are/were in desperate rebellion. Lorna is keen on Danny because he seems to be the outsider that she is trying to be... and, back in the day, Annie probably saw Arthur in the same way, even though, “deep down”, Arthur might have been no less conservative than Annie’s father, “Donald” (Steven Hill; their re-union scene is one of cinema’s most touching). We can only guess at Annie’s grandfather but it would not surprise to get the feeling of a “family curse” that had been brewing for generations and was now pressing for resolution... Annie hopes that Donald will take musically gifted Danny back into the conservative fold from which she had rebelled a generation earlier...

Mythically, then, we are in the realm of Apollo the musician... who is also the god of family-curse-resolutions. We don’t find out, but it is likely that Arthur’s release of his son back into a world wherein he can be truthful and, in turn, authentic has the effect of making his relationship with Annie “realer”, “realer enough” for her to want him more than any old boyfriend passing through. More importantly, if Lorna were to pursue the relationship with Danny, her ‘mis’-taken “projection” of the archetypal “outlaw” onto Danny would be retrieved, making that relationship also more “real”. Any children that Lorna & Danny might have can begin with a blanker karmic slate. This is the teleos of any thoroughgoing psychoanalysis, Freudian, Kleinian or Jungian.

It is difficult to tell for sure, but Sidney’s natal Sun in Cancer provides a reason why his meditation on global nuclear war, “Failsafe” (1964), speaks more to the feeling of a destroyed nuclear (not war, but) family than does natal Sun in Leo Stanley’s “Dr. Strangelove”. This reason hits ‘home’ when the U.S. President (Henry Fonda) realizes that, to avert a full U.S.S.R. return assault that would lead to irretrievable destruction of his nation, he needs to demonstrate that he is genuine (that he won’t follow through on the U.S.A.’s mistaken initial attack) by detonating one of the U.S.A.’s own nuclear bombs onto New York City, despite the fact that he is conscious that the First Lady is presently residing there. It is also difficult to tell the effect that Sidney’s and Stanley’s very different versions of nuclear attack had on the collective, both at its “conscious” and its “unconscious” levels. The Jungian, however, might be interested in the degree to which the “collective unconscious” “caused” these movies to be made insofar as the “unconscious” was/is/will-be, for Jung, wiser than the “conscious”/“supra-conscious”. Were these films made by the “collective unconscious” for those who were alive in the 1960s or were they made by the “collective unconscious” for those who are alive in the 2020s? At least, ‘2020s-ites’ like Christopher Nolan & Vladimir Putin have seen them.

SIDNEY LUMET'S PSYCHOLOGICAL 'TOP 5'

Sidney was prolific enough for a 'top 10'; Lumet-philes may want to add, "The Pawnbroker", "Serpico", "Murder on the Orient Express" & "The Verdict"...

1: RUNNING ON EMPTY (1988) ☹☹☹

Although, at first pass, this movie is a depth psychological study, the religious-philosophical issue of what to do in the face of unnecessary suffering enters the frame at second pass. There is a school of strategic thought – it is not clear if "Arthur" (Judd Hirsch) is a subscriber – that accepts a casualty here is worthwhile if it saves multiple casualties there (e.g. "Saving Private Ryan") and, going a step further, a casualty here is better than a sabotage here because the former generates more publicity... and, who is to say that publicity had no role in the U.S.A.'s eventual withdrawal from Vietnam? Whatever the answer is, the "bigger" question, "is-might-right?", falls into the sea.

2: 12 ANGRY MEN (1957) ☹☹

This one might be more a filmed play than a movie but, however it is witnessed, this play/movie will eternally invite astrologers to play "who's who?" in respect of the "12-ness" of the zodiac's cycle. If there is a problem with this kind of exercise, it might be that, insofar as we notice some signs being more heroic and other signs being more shadowy, some characters are more 'Sun in xxxx' & others are more 'Saturn in xxxx'. This means that any 'astrolo-commentary' would require a long Jungian preamble.

3: FAILSAFE (1964) ☹☹

"The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists" has set the current "doomsday clock" at 90 seconds to midnight. To put this in perspective, it is worth knowing that the clock was initially set at 720 seconds to midnight at the 1947 outset of the Cold War that, in the sky, was symbolized by a Saturn-Pluto conjunction in Leo. Then, with Saturn having completed its subsequent semi-cycle, the clock was brought forward to 120 seconds to midnight... the year of the Cuban Missile Crisis & Sidney/Stanley in late production.

4: NETWORK (1976) ☹☹

Both this and the next film were made when Sidney's Moon had "progressed" to fullness in Aquarius (Sun now "progressed" from Cancer into Leo) and, so, it is no big surprise to see him interested in "dissociated" characters. "Howard Beale" (Peter Finch) may be radically "dissociated" – because of his access to the immaterial realm trumps his integration of it – but, in '76, there were distinctions between mad prophets & holders of office. Not so, 50 years on... distinctions are now "culturally cancelled".

5: DOG DAY AFTERNOON (1975) ☹☹

The backstory of sexual non-development – married "Sonny" (Al Pacino) had decided to rob a bank so that "Leon" (Chris Sarandon), Sonny's gay lover, could pay for his sex-change surgery – coheres with "regression" from the I.C. because Sonny is married to psychologically castrating "Angie" (Susan Peretz) and is unable to imagine a different kind of wife. It so happens that John Wojtowicz, the real-life Sonny, would eventually pay for the surgery from the royalties that he had received from this film.