

Taurus and Scorpio, an unlikely alliance

by Alvaro Artagaveytia

The zodiacal mechanism is composed in principle of twelve pieces that contain various peculiarities, not only because of their own nature (have you ever thought that they are eleven members of a fantastic animal kingdom and a measuring instrument called Libra), but also because of their natural placement.

Thus, we learn that these twelve arcs of 30 degrees each that make up the zodiacal circle and represent an asterism in the sky, are arranged in a way that does not seem arbitrary.

As we enter into the knowledge of the astrological discipline as apprentices, we begin to "pray" by heart their names, to later understand that they are something like molds -I like to think of them as crucibles- with a configuration product of their three basic parameters: Element, polarity and property.

Each sign will then be a unique blend of this combination, such as Aries, which is recited in this language as: Fire-Positive-Cardinal, or Virgo: Earth-Negative-Mutable.

Once we enter this domain, we can move on to understand a premise repeated in many texts: "Opposite signs are complementary".

Opposite signs are called those that are 180 degrees apart from each other and yet; they are not total strangers, although in many accounts they are placed as antagonists.

Let us test our formula: Gemini opposes Sagittarius.

Then Gemini according to our equation can be called: Air-Positive-Mutable and Sagittarius will be: Fire-Positive-Mutable and Sagittarius will be: Fire-Positive-Mutable.

Thus, we observe that our set of opposites, share many more characteristics than we would at first expect, since, both polarity and property are repeated.

It is simple but strange that then the signs with the greatest differences in material of construction are the contiguous ones, that is to say those that are 30 degrees apart, or the so-called "inconjuncts", those that are separated by 150 or 210 degrees.

Let's try this simple formula again first with the contiguous ones.

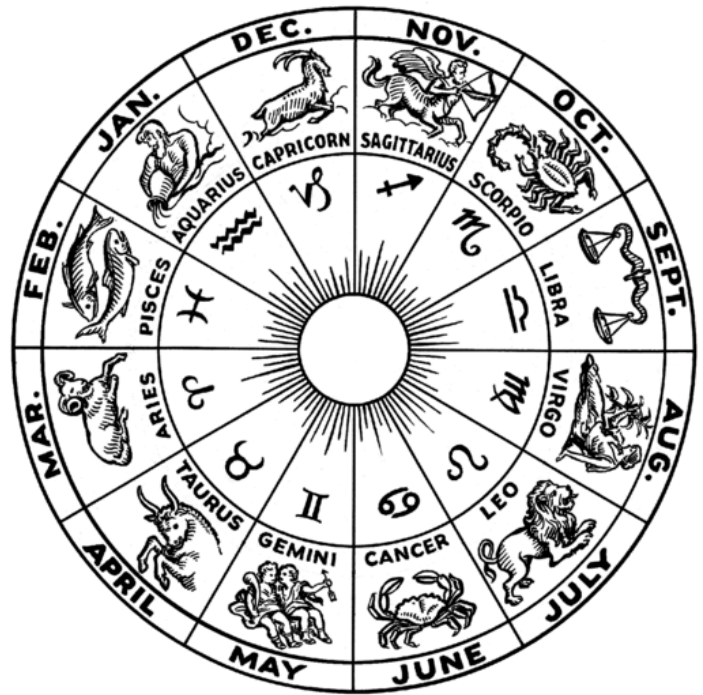
Let's take the Capricorn/Aquarius pair = Earth-Negative-Cardinal/Air-Positive-Fixed.

Good; nothing repeats itself.

Now a set of inconjuncts: Libra/Pisces = Air-Positive-Cardinal/Water-Negative-Mutable.

We find no matches either.

So, it turns out that the opposite pairs (Aries/Libra, Taurus/Scorpio, etc.); contain building materials in common.



So, we will give a brief tour of one of them (Taurus/Scorpio), to see how already in the times of Babylonian mythology; these antagonists shared much more than just living on opposite sides of the Zodiac.

Diving in documents of Cultural Astronomy that are always a useful source for our discipline, we find the writing of George Latura, called: "Taurus & Scorpius: Gilgamesh to Mithras"(1), where the author stops first in the "Commentary of the dream of Scipio"(2) of Macrobius that locates the celestial gates between the Milky Way and the opposite point in the Zodiac, which comes to coincide with the constellations of Taurus and Scorpius.

In the same place, we can read further on that the symbolism of the Bull and the Scorpion is prior to the Greco-Roman culture.

This image corresponds to the combat between the allies Gilgamesh and Enkidu, facing the fearsome Humbaba - vaguely reminiscent of the guardian of hell called Charon - and seems to tell us many things about our "new" signs of the Zodiac: Taurus and Scorpio.

The first, Gilgamesh; the best known for his prominence in Mesopotamian mythology who here appears on the left, shaped like a bull according to his lower limbs and tail. Then, in the center, Humbaba and on the right the enigmatic Enkidu with his scorpion tail.

Before recounting the epic of these two friends, facing Humbaba, the guardian of Enlil's forest - the god who possessed the tablets of destiny - let us begin by understanding the origin of Enkidu.

Enkidu roamed the forest outside Uruk like a wild animal. When the goddess Aruru (remember Hera, the always angry wife of Zeus?) tried to make the creature fulfill its purpose on earth, that is, to defeat Gilgamesh in combat, she saw the strength and great vanity of this king of the Sumerians. Later in the story, Enkidu remembers his mission and goes to Uruk, where he meets Gilgamesh for the first time.

However, Gilgamesh was still a child at the time, so Enkidu refuses to attack him until he grows up, in the hope that he will become a good person. To Enkidu's misfortune, as he grows up, Gilgamesh becomes a tyrant who abuses his rights, so Enkidu goes to the sacred temple and challenges Gilgamesh.

In combat, the two warriors strike up a friendship as they find they have equal strengths and share dangerous adventures.

Now with our Sumerian Scorpio introduced, we can delve into the story of the battle with Humbaba:

Gilgamesh and Enkidu's friendship having been struck after their initial fight, they set out on an adventure into the cedar forest beyond the seventh mountain range to slay Humbaba (3):



-Enkidu, listen to me: since a man cannot pass beyond the end of his life, I want to leave for the mountains to establish my renown there-.

So, our characters prepare for the journey with the curious condition that when Gilgamesh informs his mother, she is troubled and gives advice to Enkidu who now has the ability to interpret his friend's nightmares every time (five in all) that they arise.

It seems important then to note that our scorpion friend Enkidu, can interpret dreams too, doesn't it?

When they are finally arriving in front of the monster, it is Gilgamesh who is frightened, and Enkidu gives him courage.

Gilgamesh then tricks the monster into giving him his seven "shining ones" by offering him his sisters as wife and concubine (yes, I know; there are some vapors of the story of Orpheus and his Lyre in the matter). When Humbaba lets his guard down, Gilgamesh punches him and captures him. Defeated, Humbaba begs for mercy from a receptive Gilgamesh, but Enkidu convinces him to kill him. In a last-ditch effort, Humbaba tries to escape, but is beheaded by Enkidu.

In several stories, Enkidu appears as a primitive and savage being, who is driven by his instincts and yet has the ability to mold himself to change his form and represents the dark side of nature. It seems to me an excellent way to describe Scorpio.

On the other hand his friend Gilgamesh is the opposite who personifies civilization, the laws and obligations of the city, which accompanies us every day in our taurine routines.

For Sumerian history, the two together and indissolubly contributed to the development of civilization and its strengthening.