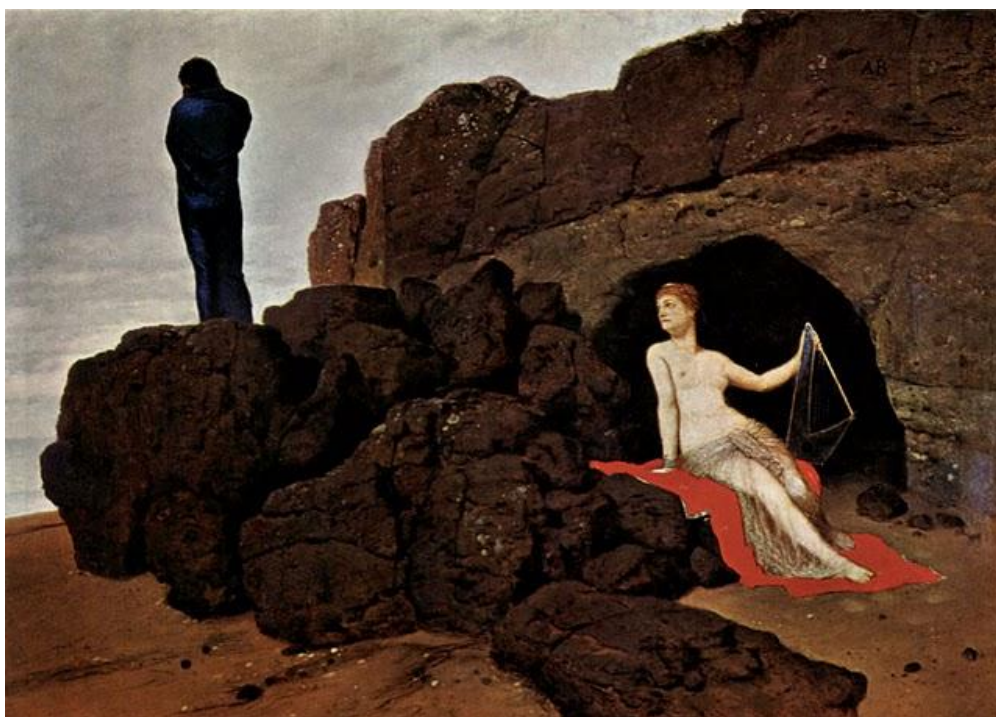


A journey inside the 9th House

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Odysseus and Calypso by Arnold Böcklin

Abu Masharⁱ says about the 9th house: “the ninth, that of travel and pilgrimage, laws and divine contemplation, philosophy and the arts, writings and visions.”

Alchabitiusⁱⁱ says: “The ninth house: of pilgrimage and travels, faith and religion, wisdom, philosophy and books, also letters and legates, reports and dreams; and it signifies the beginning of the second half of life”

Originally the 9th House was not associated with travel and as a matter of fact it sounds a bit weird connect travels with a house that means God, philosophy and justice.

Only in the medieval times the idea of travel was added as an attribution of the 9th house and this essay aims to give a possible answer on why this association has been made later.

First let's review the first approaches been made on the subject and going back to the early writers of our era.

Antiochusⁱⁱⁱ says that according to Hermes there are seven signs conducive of advantageous business and they are the Ascendant (taken as a whole house, including the anterior portion of the rising degree, up to all the portion after it), the Midheaven, the Descendant, the opposite place to the Midheaven, and the post-ascension of the Midheaven (i.e. the 11th house) and the two trigonal figures to the Ascendant, that are the 9th house and 5th house.

He continues by saying that there are four signs declining from the pivots: the 3rd, the 6th and the 12th.

But, according to Nechepso, the Egyptian king, the 4 pivots and the signs post-ascending are conducive of business.

We can see a disagreement between their points of view, since Hermes considers the 9th house as "conductive of business" and Nechepso does not. In the other hand Nechepso considers the 2nd and the 8th house as "conductive of business", and Hermes did not even mention them.

However they agree that the 5th and the 11th are useful houses. The problem remains in the usefulness of the 9th house.

Schmidt considers that the key to understand this duality and the controversial points lies in the word "conductive of business" a word which came from the Greek *chrematizo*, meaning action that provides things, and things are what we need the most in our day to day lives.

In this sense, we see clearly that the post-ascensional houses are productive of material things: the 2nd House produces substance, the 5th house produces the father's money or the money from the native's properties, the 8th House produces substance coming from partnership and the 11th House, the Good Spirit, produces all the good things which come from the king or from our action in the world.

As for the declining houses, they are not able to conduct the affairs, which do not mean that they do not act, but are far less useful and Robert Schmidt says that they are "lazy".

It is therefore incomprehensible that the 9th house, a declining house, is considered so beneficial and "conductive" as the 11th House or the Midheaven.

Schmidt believes that the apparent controversy can be resolved by considering that the ninth house is beneficial, even if not conducive of

advantageous business. And it is active in its effects, but unlike the 6th and 12th places (relating to people who are not part of the native's life, as enemies, imprisonment, illness, employees) the 9th house is linked directly to the native, because of the fact of being trigonal to the rising sign.

The 9th House's activities are those which are not for immediate profit or gain of material things, but they are of the kind that the free man can undertake after the daily work using the leisure time to discuss God, ethics and philosophy or the science of the stars. So, the 9th house does not conduct to advantageous business, but it leads to wisdom. This is the fortune of the 9th House.

When reading the Hellenistic astrological literature written before or shortly after our era and comparing the significance of the 9th House with the meaning in medieval times and in the modern literature, we see that the meaning of long trips was corrupted, especially in modern times.

Nowadays the 3rd house is related to traffic, transportation and short trips, and the 9th house with the long trips, as if the substantial difference between both was a question of quantity or a question of geographical distance.

My opinion is that regarding to travels the third house is actually the house of travels and that the 9th house refers to the journeys within our own self in search of larger meanings.

The 9th house is not related to physical journeys, **at least not the common journeys**, but it can signify mythic journeys (or mystic ones, if you like).

When we read J. Joseph Campbell we see that all the mythological journeys are related to travels inland and the hero's quest represents the universal journey of the men on earth. This journey begins in the cradle and ends when we give the last breath.

As Ulysses in the Odyssey, we have little control of our track record. The only certainty is impermanence, be it about our work, about our loved ones, our physical health, etc. Everything is temporary and the future is unpredictable.

Only the Self remains the same and still we do not know for how long.

The grand tour of the 9th House is to reach this knowledge and accept it as part of life, the only possible route, the ticket that leads from beginning to end, with many surprises needing adjustment, followed by joys and cheers and more insecurities and dangers.

Only in this way the voyages are inserted in 9th house: if they are lived as a spiritual growth.

There are trips to our beach house, and they are not matter of the 9th house, even if the distance is big, because they are predictable. However they can turn into an object of the 9th house if it happens that you see monsters and mermaids on the way or perhaps if the sea becomes tumultuous and stormy, and you are involved in a hurricane without proportions, requiring urgent adaptations which will confront you directly with your impotence, giving room to questions about the mysterious world where we live. So yes, if the trip sounds like that to you, this trip will be matter of the 9th house, no matter how far it is from our home. All trips potentially can be accidents of the 9th house, especially if it happens imponderable things, wonders that dazzle us to tears, losses and fears. This kind of journey imitates the soul's journey on earth and will be forever in our memory as a heroic experience, a great adventure, as big as when we embraced the adventure of our own birth.

This trip will not be forgotten and nothing will ever be equal after it. It is about this kind of philosophy and this great journey that the 9th house refers to and in this way we have to understand the words of the medieval authors.

When we became pungently conscious that we are pilgrims subjected to all kinds of accidents, good and bad events, and it happens later, in the second half of our life, because the decline houses are “lazy”, and we realize that we count only with our Self, at this moment the philosophy, God and astrology become "conductive of advantageous business" in my opinion, because without wisdom we can't cope the journey of life.

Through the 9th House and its rulers we can meditate about the mysteries and try to figure out how they play its magic and through the philosophy we can lead our mind in the direction of wisdom and awareness knowing that the unique thing that we know is that we are in the same universal path of all souls in earth and one day we will no longer be there.

Indeed, while the heavens are dragged over our heads through the action of the Primary Motion the 9th house will turn into the 8th.

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ⁱ Abu Masharr al-Balkhi: Abbreviation of the introduction to Astrology, Ed.and translated Charles Burnett, K.Yamamoto and Michio Yano(Leiden: EJ.Brill,1994)

ⁱⁱ Al-Qabisi, The Introduction to Astrology, ed. Charles Burnett. K.Yamamoto and Michio Yano(London and Turin:The Warburg institute,2004)

ⁱⁱⁱ Definitions and Foundations translated by Robert Schmidt, Tares volume 2,section 19.