

## Interpreting the Venus Cycle

As astrologers we look at Venus in the chart by sign, house and aspect. The position of Venus describes how we show affection and relate to others and she reflects the kinds of relationships we enjoy. Venus can also say something about our cultural tastes and our creative and artistic skills. Planets in the 7<sup>th</sup> house and oppositions in the chart can also show that relationships are important to us and give us more information. However, this is not the whole story. Looking at the phase of the Venus cycle we are born under can be very revealing. A distinction has always been made between Venus as a morning star and Venus as an evening star and its retrograde period has always been considered significant.

If we are born during the retrograde period, when Venus is still an evening star and begins to disappear towards inferior conjunction, we may question main stream values about relationships, culture and art. There may be themes from the past we are dealing with. The status quo no longer brings satisfaction and we may glimpse new ways of relating or foresee new cultural trends.

Born during the inferior conjunction, in the middle of the retrograde period, we are in the depths of the death/rebirth phase. We are like a seed which may spurt forth new growth - given the chance. We may leave everyday social interactions and conventional relationships behind and pay more attention to the inner world. It can be difficult to be spontaneous and we may spend more time reflecting on our behaviour in any relationship. We can become very subjective and the thoughts and feelings we carry in our inner world can dominate our approach to others. When Venus passes inferior conjunction, it is still retrograde as it starts to rise before the Sun and begin its journey as a morning star. If we are born on this part of the retrograde cycle we have started to leave the past behind and are developing new values about relationship, culture and art, but possibly we are not quite ready to express them openly.

In Sumerian myth, Inanna, Queen of Heaven (Venus) descends into the Underworld to attend the funeral of Ereshkigal's husband. Ereshkigal is Queen of the Underworld. Like any other visitor, Inanna is stripped of a piece of her finery at each gate. At the 7<sup>th</sup> gate she is left completely naked and killed by Ereshkigal. She is then hung on a hook and left to rot. Before her journey into Ereshkigal's realm, Inanna had asked her aids to rescue her if she had not returned to Heaven within three days. To cut a long story short, Ereshkigal agrees to release Inanna's body in return for a substitute. Inanna, who had now been brought back to life by her rescuers, said she would protect those who had remained loyal to her. When she returned to heaven, she found that her lover, Dumuzi, had betrayed her and taken over her realm as King of Heaven. Worst of all he had not mourned her. Her revenge was to send him to the Underworld. He tried to escape and after much haggling she agreed that he and his sister could swap places, each spending time in Ereshkigal's realm. There are many versions of this early myth which has been linked to the retrograde period of Venus.

As Venus turns direct, she has already started to appear as a morning star. At this phase of her cycle she has been known as Venus Lucifer, the Bringer of Light and Venus Phosphorus. In traditional astrology she is known as a masculine Venus. She is the Warrior Goddess and she comes out fighting as she enters the morning star part of the cycle. If we are born with Venus as a morning star, we are more spontaneous, impulsive and creative. We may bring in new values and new ways of relating. However, we are independent souls at heart, having less time for all consuming relationships as we are more concerned with personal development and creativity. The morning star phase peaks when Venus reaches greatest elongation west (west of the Sun). Born during this period, we are at our most independent and less willing to compromise with others.

If we are born during the period when Venus starts to travel behind the Sun, we are still independent and spontaneous, but as Venus approaches superior conjunction, the desire for relationship grows stronger. We may become more aware of the needs, thoughts and feelings of others. If we are born during the

superior conjunction between Venus and the Sun, we are at the 'full' phase as the Goddess of Love and Battle. We are much more objective and aware of our inner conflicts when it comes to relationship. We are able to take other peoples' needs into account. Maybe we are in a good position to act as mediators in difficult situations.

Soon after the superior conjunction, she enters the evening star phase as Venus Hesperus and she is associated with Aphrodite, the Greek Goddess of Love. In traditional astrology, she is known as a feminine Venus. Born with Venus as an evening star, relationships become very important to us and our desire for relationship peaks when Venus reaches greatest elongation east. We are still very willing to compromise taking others' needs into account. Venus is in her peaceful phase. Eventually Venus will turn retrograde as an evening star and then disappear from view. She forms another inferior conjunction with the Sun and a new cycle begins.

How do we know which part of the Venus cycle we were born under? If Venus is retrograde, approaching or separating from inferior conjunction, she has disappeared from view with the naked eye and we know it is an inferior conjunction because she is retrograde and marked as such in the ephemeris! Venus as a morning star always rises before the Sun and is therefore in an earlier degree of the Zodiac. Venus disappears from view again as she approaches and separates from superior conjunction with the Sun. We know when Venus is at superior conjunction as she is never retrograde. Venus, as an evening star, is always in a later degree of the Zodiac in relation to the Sun. Raphael's yearly ephemeris notes when Venus is at greatest elongation west or east in the section called Phenomena.

It is worth looking at progressed Venus in relation to the progressed Sun (not to the natal Sun) in order to find out which phase we are experiencing at any one time. In one life time we will only complete a small part of the cycle by secondary progression. For instance, we may leave the morning star phase and move towards superior conjunction. This may mean that we become less subjective, impulsive and independent and our desire for relationship may become stronger.

There are five complete Venus synodic cycles in 8 years (minus 2 days) and, every 8 years, Venus will form another inferior conjunction with the Sun within 2° of the previous one 8 years earlier. From 2004, the inferior conjunctions of Venus are at:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Inferior conjunction of Venus with the Sun</b>
6 June 2004	18° Gemini
13 January 2006	24° Capricorn
18 August 2007	25° Leo
27 March 2009	07° Aries
29 October 2010	06° Scorpio
6 June 2012	16° Gemini

4 years after the inferior conjunction, Venus will be close to the same degree at superior conjunction. For instance, she was at 18° Gemini on 6 June 2004 (at inferior conjunction) and will be at 19° Gemini on 9 June 2008 – 4 years later at superior conjunction. If Venus is close to one of the degrees (listed above) at birth, we will experience quite a long period during life when we directly experience the retrograde periods of transiting Venus every 8 years. 4 years later, at superior conjunction, there may be more awareness of the themes we experienced during the previous inferior conjunction, or circumstances in our lives may have reached some kind of climax. Try these ideas out and see how they work in your life.

#### References

- Rupert, Alexander. (1978). *Cycles of Becoming*. USA :CRCS Publications.
- Rudhyar, Dane. Rael, Leyla. (1980). *Astrological Aspects, A Process Oriented Approach*. USA: Aurora Press.
- Solar Fire V5, Astrolabe Inc.
- Perera, Sylvia Brinton. (1981). *Descent of the Goddess*. NY: Inner City Books.
- Patilas, Gerasime. *Retrograde Planets*, Module 4, Diploma Course, astrologycollege.com