

The Third House and the Goddess in Classical Astrology

by **Stephanie Johnson**



13th Century Italian astrologer Guido Bonatti links the 3rd House with “blood” and “brethren”.¹ Alcabitius adds that the 3rd House also depicts faith and religion, commands, messengers, changes and short journeys and the condition of life before death; all sects and heretics; neighbours, fellow citizens such as masters and slaves.

There are few surprises in the aforementioned definitions of the 3rd House, but recently I unearthed a little known fact about the 3rd House. I discovered that Paulus Alexandrinus also states that the 3rd House is also known as the “Goddess” House.²

Astrologer Lee Lehman states that the idea of the 3rd House being the Goddess House is a very old idea. She says the original Greek names for the 3rd and 9th Houses, the religious axis of the chart, were “goddess” and “god” respectively.³

The 9th House has traditionally been associated with religion and images of God. Therefore, it stands to reason, that its opposite 3rd House could be associated with alternative religious (sects in Classical Astrology terms) and images of feminine “Gods” or “Goddesses.”

These could refer to religious manifestations that are unequivocally feminine in nature, as Lee Lehman states. “In Catholicism, visions of the Virgin Mary, or a focus on devotion to the image of Mary would be such a case. Devotion associated with feminine types of monuments or landscapes would also apply: places such as grottoes, or fountains, or even feminine place names would be another example. Also, in considering the status of women in Greek culture at the time of the naming of these houses, it is clear that women (and by extension, goddesses) were the out-of-power party in religious practice. Thus, 3rd House religion often encompasses heresies, or practices that don’t follow the societal norm of the Native’s cultural environment vis a vis Alcabitius’ “sects”.⁴

The 3rd House could also depict anyone who expresses appreciation/devotion/reverence to women i.e. modern day feminists?⁵

If the 9th House represents what or who we revere, then perhaps the 3rd House can depict irreverence, perhaps even through humour and wit?

The religious interpretation of the 3rd house is very often overlooked. However, when we think about it the 3rd House is opposing the 9th House. Usually the 9th House gets all the

credence for being connected with religion and yet we have already seen some references to the 3rd House as being connected with faith and religion, according to Alcabitius. In other words the 3rd/9th house axis could easily be the axis of religion.

The cadent houses (3, 6, 9 and 12) are much maligned in Classical Astrology. When we start studying Classical Astrology we soon learn that to have a planet in the 12th or 6th House is almost as bad as being a Scorpio in modern astrology! The 3rd House isn't far behind the 6th and 12th and the 9th – well it doesn't seem too bad because at least those with strong 9th House emphasis are able to escape into the echelons of academia or spiritual communes.

I think that this is an important point and brings us back to the cadent nature of the 3rd house/9th house axis. Often we focus on the wonderful uplifting nature of the 9th House such as philosophy, study, travel and all these wonderful things. We forget that an out-of-balance 9th House can be the person who never settles down, who refuses to live with the consequences of their actions, the person who desperately needs a guru in order to find meaning in their lives, and the person who can actually begin to believe that they are God. Hence the Goddess House is needed to balance the God?

As Astrologer Curtis Mainwaring says in his article the Third House is the opposite place (9th) has to do with orthodox religion; therefore this place has to do with unorthodox religion and beliefs on the fringe of society indicated by the “place of the Goddess”. Modern astrology often compares the 3rd house to Gemini and to the mental variety that Gemini encourages. This is contrary to the orthodoxy of religion, which Gemini's ideas constantly question. In the middle ages, the Moon became misunderstood by clerics to be aligned with darkness and evil, possibly because of it's association with the nocturnal sect. According to the church, a woman (the Moon) was responsible for bringing sin to Adam. Here, the Moon delights in contrariety, So, this house gives signs for mental habits and early education/brain wiring (the mind), and alignment of faith. ⁶

The Classical Astrologers also claim that the 3rd House is the place of the Goddess of the Moon! Therefore the Moon is in its Joy in the 3rd House. We really start to see the 3rdHouse/9th House axis when we place the Moon in the chart. I think we also start to see that women's charts can differ quite markedly in the expression of the 3rd House Moon. Women with 3rd House Moon can be revered and can express themselves with reverence to the Goddess. Some also become seen as icons or Goddesses in society. Examples include Joan Crawford (☽ ♋ in 3rd H); Karen Carpenter (☽ ♀); Connie Francis (☽ ♋).

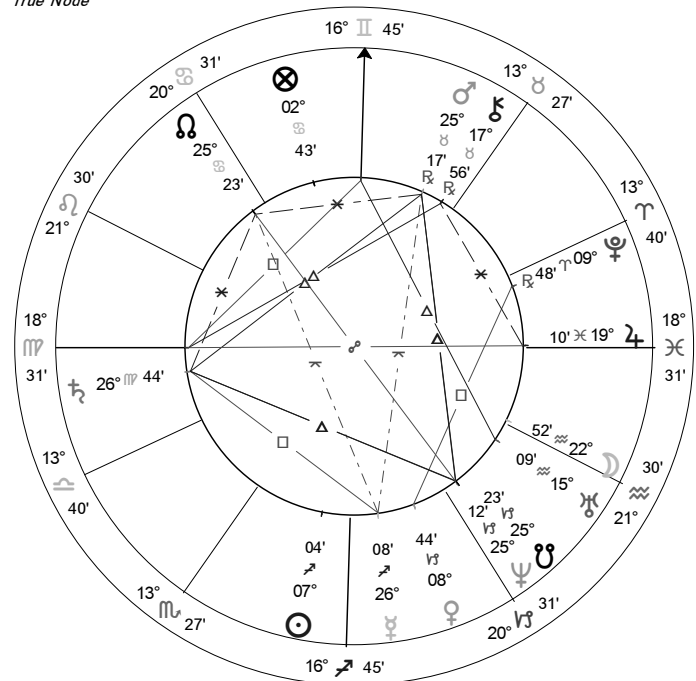
Whereas Men? Well perhaps they are more able to express some irreverence. Perhaps they gain some freedom through lightening up. Chart samples include Kevin Kline (☽ in 3rd H) and Jack Nicholson (☽). Just for interests' sake in contrast evangelical religious leader Billy Graham has a 9th House Moon.

Let's look at one example that may help us apply the wisdom of the Classical Astrologers. Author Louisa May Alcott born 29 November 1832 NS 5.30.40am UT Germantown PA 40N02 75W10 ⁷

Louisa Alcott (November 29, 1832 - March 6, 1888) is one of the greatest female writers of the 19th century. Her most famous book is, “Little Women”. Not only did she write this series (the history of Jo March and her family spans four books: “Little Women”, “Good Wives” “Little Men”, and “Jo’s Boys”) but several other books. Her “Hospital Sketches” is a moving first-person account of the life of a civil war nurse. “Transcendental Wild Oats” is a funny, yet sometimes subtly bitter, account of her life in a commune. She wrote well over a dozen books, as well as many poems, stories, and essays. Louisa lived at Orchard House next to the School of Philosophy, founded by her father Amos Bronson Alcott.

Louisa May Alcott
 Natal Chart
 29 Nov 1832 NS
 5:30:40 am UT +0:00
 Germantown, Pa
 40°N02' 075°W10'
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 True Node

Compliments of-
 Seeing With Stars Astrology
 Stephanie Johnson
 PO Box 159 Stepney SA 5069
 Email: consultants@esotech.com.au



Louisa has her Sun in 3rd House. Her Sagittarian Sun in the 3rd House shows her as an independent and freethinker, a philosopher, writer. It also depicts a love of her siblings.

One of her best-known books, “Little Women”, is about four sisters. Her best-known character Jo March, is autobiographical and depicts many of the characteristics of the 3rd House Sun.

The dispositor, term ruler and triplicity ruler of Louisa’s Sun is Jupiter. Jupiter is in good condition on an angle. It is also possible that this configuration depicts many of the characteristics of her own philosophical father. (Also note that her Part of Father falls in the 3rd House.)

Louisa’s Sun rules the 12th House. She obviously loved spending time on her own, probably with her writing. It also indicates a love of nature. She spent much of her childhood moving home because her father was a alternative style teacher. He struggled to make a living from the unorthodox teachings of his school, which was usually situated right next to the family home.

We can also note that the ruler of Louisa’s 3rd House is Mars.

“Confronting a society that offered little opportunity to women seeking employment, Louisa determined “...I will make a battering-ram of my head and make my way through this rough and tumble world.” Whether as a teacher, seamstress, governess, or household servant, for many years Louisa did any work she could find.”⁸⁸

<http://www.louisamayalcott.org/louisamaytext.html>

Mars is not particularly dignified through rulership, but does trine Saturn in the 1st House and the South Node. This pulls in the father image quite strongly and his influence on her faith and education.

“Bronson Alcott was singular among the Transcendentalists in boldly embodying his ideals. In his schools he introduced art, music, nature study, field trips, and physical education into the curriculum, while banishing corporal punishment. He encouraged children to ask questions and taught through dialogue and example. His daughter, Louisa, wrote of his methods: “My father taught in the wise way which unfolds what lies in the child’s nature, as a flower blooms, rather than crammed it, like a Strasbourg goose, with more than it could digest.” Because his ideas were radically innovative, many parents did not understand the value of Alcott’s methods and his schools often failed. For this reason, the Alcotts moved more than 20 times in the first thirty years of their marriage. “⁹

We can see both the positive and negatives here. The Mars/Saturn energy brings in the poverty and the strong father influence on education and “faith”. This is alleviated by the fact that she has a Sagittarian Sun in the 3rd House with the connections to Jupiter which has given her an appropriate outlet for this energy. It allows her to be philosophical, to benefit from unorthodox teachings of her father, to be an independent thinker and to become a mouthpiece for women of the day. Note that “Little Women” was the first book of its kind to have a rebellious and “real” heroine – Jo March. It has never been out of print. In fact it allows her to express the Goddess of the 3rd House. This is particularly true in the final section of her life when the Jupiter triplicity ruler of her Sun influences her life and 3rd House. “Little Women” was written in 1868, 20 years before her death.

In all, Louisa published over 30 books and collections of stories. She died on March 6, 1888, only two days after her father, and is buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord.

As a conclusion to this article it is also interesting to briefly note Louisa’s father’s chart. Amos Bronson Alcott, born 29 November 1799 NS 8.40.36am UT Wolcott CT 41N36 73W00
¹⁰ Teacher of Transcendental philosophy in the 19th Century, Amos Alcott had a 3rd House Moon!

(Footnotes)

¹ Guido Bonatti Liber Astronomiae Vol 8 Part 2 p52

² Paulus Alexandrinus Introductory Matters Greek Track Volume 1 p51.

³ Solar Writer – Classical, software published by Esoteric Technologies Pty Ltd. Text author J Lee Lehman PHd

⁴ Solar Writer – Classical, software published by Esoteric Technologies Pty Ltd. Text author J Lee Lehman PHd

⁵ Solar Writer – Classical, software published by Esoteric Technologies Pty Ltd. Text author J Lee Lehman PHd

⁶ <http://www.astrology-x-files.com/astro-houses/house3.htm>

⁷ Blackwell Data Collection, Published by Astrolabe Inc

⁹ <http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/transcendentalism/authors/alcott/>

¹⁰ Blackwell Data Collection, Published by Astrolabe Inc