

# Mystic Moments

By Nick Kollerstrom

*"I saw eternity the other night.  
Like a great ring of pure and endless light."*  
Henry Vaughan

*"Heavenly lightnings passed and repassed in the  
depths of his being, and it seemed to him that he  
walked on air."*  
Heinrich Suso

The best mystic moments are mostly lost. Mystics lose the date of their big moment, they forget when the great turning-point of their life arrived. After all, it does appear as 'timeless' when it happens. We here seek for the few moments of mystical illumination for which dates can be ascertained. And how do we recognise such a moment? It has to be in some way transcendent, and to have involved an experience of *unity*. The experience of mystical illumination is not the same as having a vision, a near-death experience, an out-of-the-body experience, a religious conversion, or even a joyful moment or an experience of realisation, although it can involve any of these. It differs from scientific enlightenment in that the individual is *part of* that unity. Using the dated mystic moments here found we endeavour to test certain theories of celestial influence: is there a celestial pattern that *predisposes* people to such an experience? I managed to find fifteen such moments, here they are.

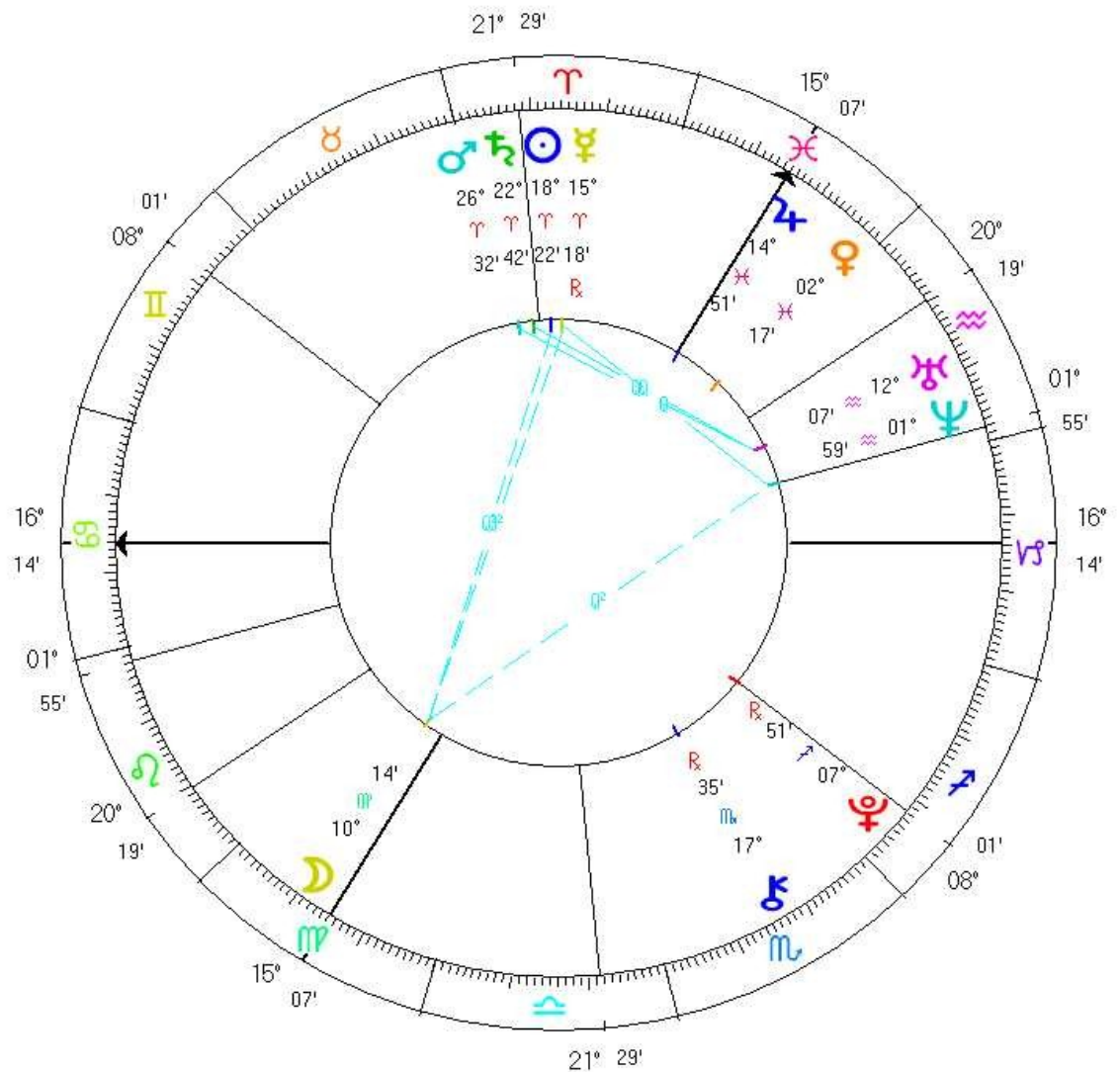
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- 1.** At twilight on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 1964, **Muz Murray** sat on the shore of Cyprus and  
    `within him, in a moment, a crack opened in the egg of cosmic understanding. His whole being became illumined with a sudden revelatory awareness sensed through every cell in his body which changed the course of his life, and ultimately, the lives of many who have come into contact with him. Those few moments of `cosmic consciousness' led him to intensify his studies into the why and wherefore of man's relationship to the All.

This led him to found the hippie journal 'Gandalf's Garden' a few years later, and these quotes come from its first issue in May 1968. Checking over his account of this event thirty years later (from my

complete collection of this mag), it dawned on me that it had strong quintile aspects.

**Hazel Courtney**  
**Natal Chart [2]**  
 8 Apr 1998  
 11:00 BST -1:00  
 London, UK  
 51°N30' 00°W10'  
*Geocentric*  
*Tropical*  
*Placidus*  
*True Node*



**2.** On 8 April, 1998, **Hazel Courtney** while walking into Harrods started having a 'divine encounter' that changed her life:

'As I walked into the turnstile at the entrance to the bread stall, it stuck, and during those few seconds of feeling trapped I felt as though a volcano of energy was erupting inside me, my chest and head felt as though they were going to explode. Within seconds, I could hear voices in my head, which I knew had not emanated from my brain. Within 15 minutes I was rushed to my doctor, who believed I might have suffered a heart attack. As he applied the heart monitors, I began to "feel" my doctor's thoughts in my head. Believe me that was an awesome moment for both of us. Several hundred more were to follow.

'As my experience accelerated, the physical effects became almost intolerable and on the Easter Sunday with a medical doctor present I underwent a near-death – an out of the body experience during which I truly understood that human consciousness survives physical death.

Within days I was forced to leave my Sunday Times column [she worked as an alternative health columnist] due to the sheer amount of phenomena happening around me. My energy field became so powerful that light bulbs and computers would crash. By concentrating on our TV I could change channels using the power of the mind...' (1)

That will do for now! She has since written two books on the subject. This moment, I noticed, had even more quintile aspects. It is so valuable to have the time of this event, it gives us those lunar quintiles shown, which together make the 'golden triangle' (or 'divine triangle' as mathematicians sometimes call it, expressing the golden ratio) present in the sky. So, I decided to collect any other 'Mystic moments' I could find. (2)

**3. Blaise Pascal** experienced a mystic illumination, on Nov 23 1654, 10.30 pm to midnight. He kept an amulet with this written permanently within it, which was discovered after his death as tucked into the fabric of his coat. On it was written:

FEU

Dieu d'Abraham. Dieu d'Isaac Dieu de Jacob  
Non des philosophes et des savans  
Certitude joye certitude, sentiment, veue joye paix  
Dieu de Jesus Christ

Other mystical comments of a joyful nature were inscribed, eg 'My God do not leave me. This is eternal life.' (4)

**4.** While journeying from Amsterdam to Delft, **Emanuel Swedenborg** had his first experience of enlightenment that was to change his life: 'He had experienced emotional turmoil over the Easter weekend, but during his journey on Monday, he enjoyed a wonderful feeling of bliss. That night, he suddenly was seized with such trembling that he fell from his bed onto the floor' and he then 'felt that he had been divinely commissioned to do a special work.' (3) The date was then 7 April, 1744.

**5.** The US mystic **David Brainerd** had been feeling thwarted in his religious endeavours, and wasn't able to pray any more. Then, on

the Sabbath, Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup> 1739, as the Sun was setting, while walking in a thick grove,

Unspeakable glory seemed to open to the apprehension of my soul, I do not mean any external brightness, nor any imagination of a body of light, but it was a new inward apprehension or view that I had of God... My soul rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

This lasted about an hour, after which 'everything about me appeared with a different aspect from what it was wont to.' (5)

**6.** The Irishman **Paul Tyler** was living around New York in a Shaker community, when 'In the early morning of 11 May, 1895, came the crowning experience of my life'. His diary records how, that morning, his religious belief was confirmed:

'dissolving in happy tears, I sprang from my bed about five o'clock ...All this time the atmosphere of the room was vibrant with an intense white light. The presence which had been revealed in the first waking moments seemed now diffused and continuing throughout the universe.' (6)

Some weeks later Tyler wrote: 'There is a consciousness of a steady glow which is light and warmth in all my being. It is certain that ever since that morning I have had a larger and surer hold on life and have been able to work with a clearer and more attractive brain and body.'

**7.** The Danish dairy worker **Martinus Thomsen** was sitting down trying to meditate one evening, on the Tuesday of Holy week, when suddenly he felt 'in the presence of something immensely sublime.' A being 'made of fire,' of 'dazzling white light spangled with blue', came towards him and then entered into his 'own flesh and blood,' so that 'a sublime feeling thrilled me:'

The divine light that had thus taken up residence within me enabled me to take a sweeping look at the world. And I beheld continents and oceans, cities and countries, mountains and valleys - all bathed in the light now emanating from my own mind.

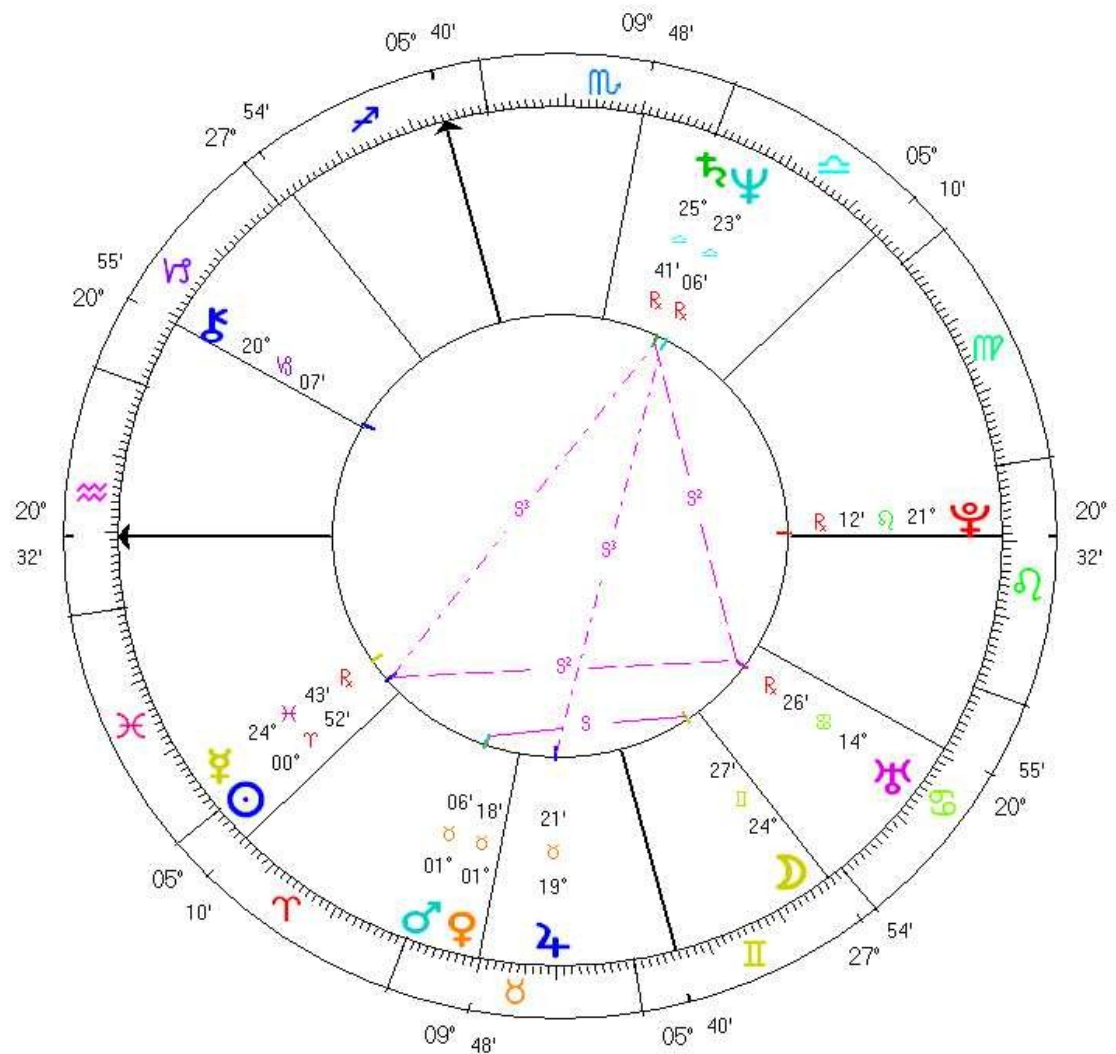
The next morning he again had an experience of the 'divine fire' in which he experienced holiness and perfection. He felt that he had been initiated into the "Divine Creative Principle" and for the rest of his life worked as Denmark's mystic teacher, founder of the Martinus Institute. (7)

**8. Sri Aurobindo** was living in Pondicherry, South India, when he experienced what he called the descent of 'overmind,' coming to dwell inwardly in his own being:

'Then at last the great day ... arrived on 24 November. The Sun had almost set... There was a deep silence in the atmosphere after the disciples had gathered there. Many saw an oceanic flood of Light rushing down from above. Everyone present felt a kind of pressure above his head. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with some electrical energy... This momentous occasion carried its significance to all in the divine dynamism of the silence, in its unearthly dignity and grandeur and in the utter beauty of its every little act. The deep impress of divinity which everyone got was for him a priceless treasure.' (8)

This event is commemorated as the so called 'Siddhi Day' on the 24th of November, 1926. NB this wasn't really the first 'experience' that Sri Aurobindo had, but that date is lost.

**Rajneesh**  
**Natal Chart (6)**  
 21 Mar 1953  
 19:00 +0:00  
 Tokyo, Tokyo  
 35°N42' 139°E46'  
*Geocentric*  
*Tropical*  
*Placidus*  
*True Node*



**9. Rajneesh** Chandra Mohan Jain was born on 11th December 1931, in Madhya Pradesh, India. He had a special experience on March 21, 1953 and described it as follows. He awoke from sleep around midnight: 'The sleep was broken by something else. I felt a

great presence around me in the room... I felt a throbbing life all around me, a great vibration - almost like a hurricane, a great storm of light.' He arose, and walked outside:

I reached to the garden where I used to go every day. The garden was closed, closed for the night. It was too late, it was almost one o'clock in the night. The gardeners were fast asleep. I had to enter the garden like a thief, I had to climb the gate. But something was pulling me towards the garden. The moment I entered the garden everything became luminous, it was all over the place - the benediction, the blessedness. I could see the trees for the first time - their green, their life, their very sap running, There was no time, there was no passage of time; it was the virgin reality - uncorrupted... . When I went back home it was four o'clock in the morning. (9)

**10.** Trappist Monk **Thomas Merton** was visiting an ancient Buddhist temple in Ceylon, when he had a 'beautiful and holy vision,' a mere week before his unexpected death.

'Looking at these [giant, Buddha-] figures, I was suddenly, almost forcibly, jerked clean out of the habitual, half-tied vision of things, and an inner clearness, clarity, as if exploding from the rocks themselves, became evident and obvious... The rock, all matter, all life, is charged with *dharmakaya* - everything is emptiness and everything is compassion.... I have now seen and have pierced through the surface and have got beyond the shadow and the disguise. This is Asia in its purity...' (10) (Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December)

**11.** While orbiting the Earth, astronaut **Edgar Mitchell** was watching how 'the earth, moon, the sun, and the planets all went through the window every two minutes' which he found to be a 'powerful, powerful experience:'

What I experienced was a grand epiphany accompanied by an exhilaration. From that moment on, my life would take a radically different course ... I actually felt what has been described as an ecstasy of unity .. I perceived the universe as in some way conscious ... the restraints and boundaries of flesh and bone fell away.'

This led him to found the Noetic Sciences institute (11). This happened two days after leaving the Moon and a day before landing back on Earth so we may place it at 8 February, 1971 (they left the Moon 6 Feb 19hrs UT, and landed in the Pacific Ocean 9 Feb 21 hrs UT)

**12.** The science fiction visionary **Philip K. Dick** - whose stories, eg *Blade Runner*, *Total Recall*, *Minority Report*, keep turning into films - went through a mystical process that lasted for several months. It had a 'gnostic' slant to it:

In February and March 1974, Dick experienced a series of visions and auditions including an information-rich "pink light" beam that transmitted directly into his consciousness. A year after the events, in March 1975, Dick summarized the experiences that would pervade his writing for the final eight years of his life:

"I speak of The Restorer of What Was Lost, The Mender of What Was Broken.

March 16, 1974: It appeared - in vivid fire, with shining colors and balanced patterns - and released me from every thrall, inner and outer.

March 18: It, from inside me, looked out and saw the world did not compute, that I - and it - had been lied to. It denied the reality, and power, and authenticity of the world, saying, 'This cannot exist; it cannot exist.'

March 20: It seized me entirely, lifting me from the limitations of the space-time matrix; it mastered me as, at the same time, I knew that the world around me was cardboard, a fake. Through its power of perception I saw what really existed, and through its power of no-thought decision, I acted to free myself. It took on in battle, as a champion of all human spirits in thrall, every evil, every Iron Imprisoning thing." (12)

**13. Matthew de Looze** had climbed up a ladder with a bucket of water to clean out an industrial centrifuge, at 12 noon, when a 'traumatic spiritual awakening' happened to him. It seemed that an electric shock passed up his spine :

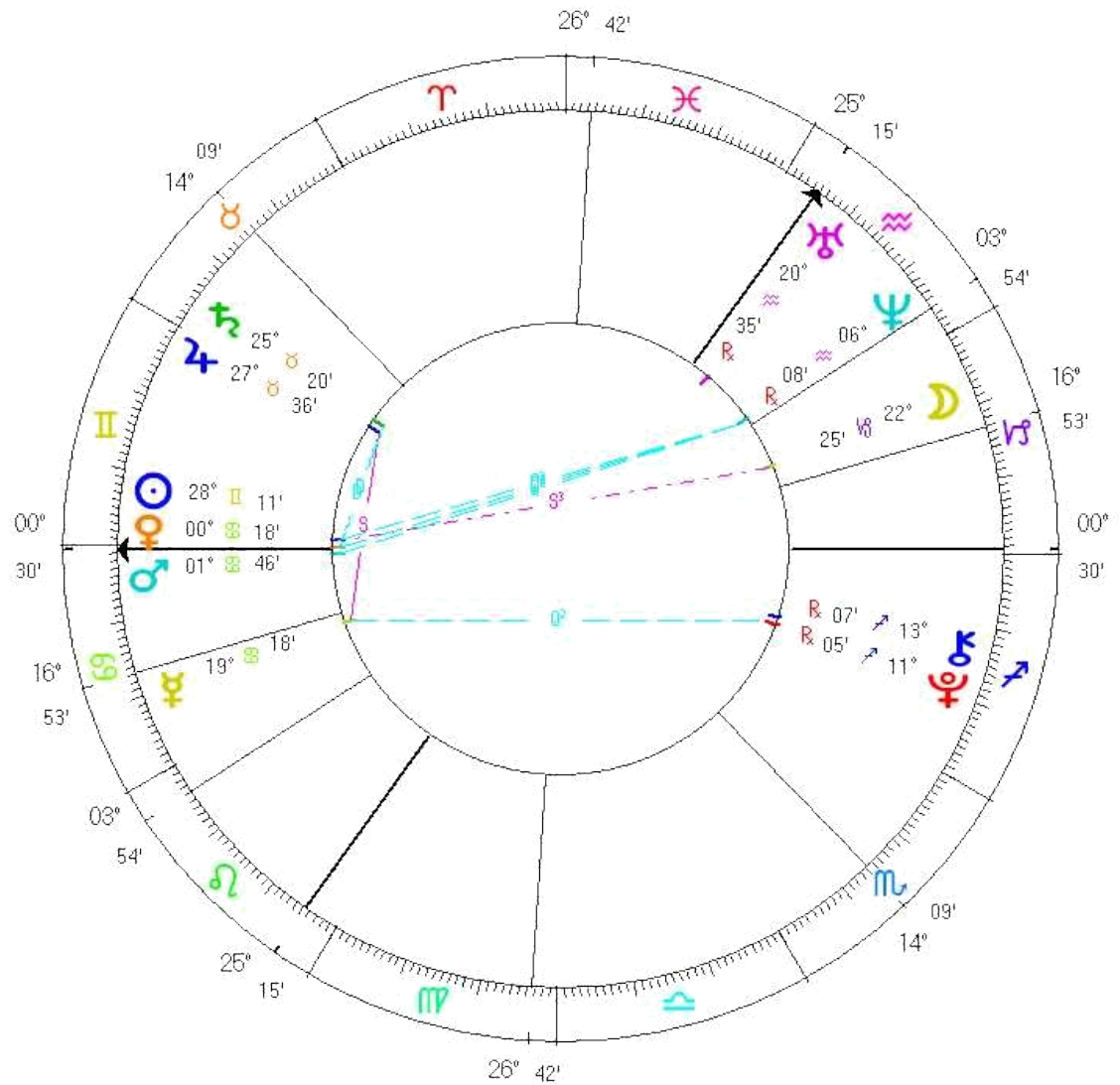
'The force I met up the ladder, though, my life has improved. It's been 11 years now. There's been a force that's been pushing me. Now I'm on stage. Before I would have been too scared. I've just come back from Colombia. I've been to Egypt, things I would never have done before... I regained conscious memories of some strange events that took place throughout my childhood and I also gained direction from a powerful spiritual force that has literally sent me on a journey of truth.'

This mystic moment has in common with that of Philip Dick a rather stressful and strange quality. It happened on 10 October, 1998. (13)

**14. David Oshana** had been asleep when his enlightenment started to occur, at 5 am in London on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. 'I first started teaching, soon after my life irrevocably changed in June 2000..., Everything was the same but strangely something was different'. He

called it a "perspective shift". Oshana described the experience of this enlightenment as being 'outside of, and watching, the life of David, which included thoughts, emotions and physical sensations'. Previously, he felt that he was trapped inside their confines, now he

Dave Oshana  
**Natal Chart (13)**  
 19 Jun 2000  
 05:00 BST -1:00  
 London, UK  
 51°N30' 00"W10'  
*Geocentric*  
*Tropical*  
*Placidus*  
*True Node*



felt free and spacious. 'Enlightenment is where consciousness experiences itself directly without the mediation of the mind and sense,' he explained. (14)

The chart shows how the Sunrise (as with the Paul Tyler moment) at dawn was gloriously irradiated with quintile and septile aspects touching that multiple-conjunction dawn-ascendant.

**15.** The British pagan **Yvonne Aburrow** reported on how, 'I did have a moment of seeing the ineffable light permeating reality, also ...Yes, approximately between 2 and 3 pm on 8 July 2007 on the Pennine Way. Walking along looking at the plants and trees and everything seemed to glow with an inner glow of divine presence. Nebulously numinous.' (15) That moment was irradiated with *seven* septile aspects.



## The Dated Mystical Moments

1654	Nov 23	22.30h	Blaise Pascal
1739	July 12 OS	19h US	David Brainerd
1744	April 7	22h	Emanuel Swedenborg
1895	May 11	5h	Paul Tyler
1921	March 22	20h	Martinus
1926	Nov 24	12h	Sri Aurobindo
1953	March 21	20h	Rajneesh
1964	January 15	14.30h	Muz Murray
1968	December 2	6h	Thomas Merton
1971	February 8	19h	Edgar Mitchell
1974	March 16	20h	Philip K. Dick
1998	April 8	11h	Hazel Courtney
1998	October 10	12h	Matthew de Looze
2000	June 19 <sup>th</sup>	5h	Dave Oshana
2007	July 8	2.30pm	Yvonne Aburrow

The above table gives the date and an estimated universal time.

## Quintiles and Septiles

In 1988 a hypothesis was tested for Eureka Moments, these being times of historic scientific inspiration, later published in in *The Eureka Effect* co-authored by myself and Mike O'Neill, namely that there would be an excess of quintile and septile aspects (16). The Eureka-moments were indeed found to have an overall excess of fifth and seventh harmonics, 17% for quintiles and no less than 51% for septiles. Here we test the very same hypothesis, using the same orbs and the same expected frequencies, but with a different group, mystics instead of scientists. This gave:

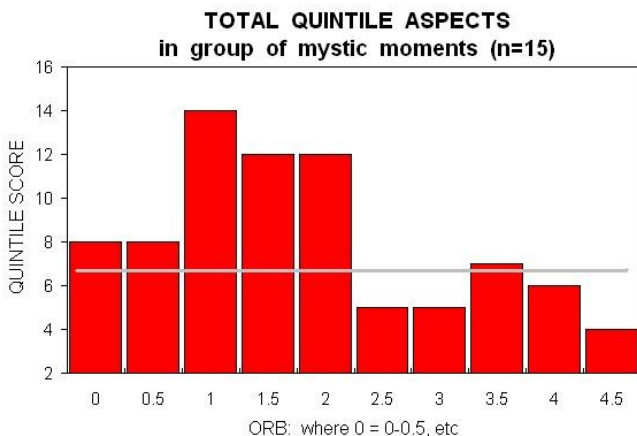
*Septiles*

*Quintiles*

Totals for the 15 charts:	50	47
Average per chart expected:	2.2	2.4
Expected for 15 charts:	32.6	36.6
Percent Excess:	<b>53% quintiles</b>	<b>28% septiles</b>

This shows an excess of these same aspects in the mystic moment group, significant at around one in a thousand ( $\chi^2 = 11.4$ ). (17) For quintiles alone, there was a *fifty percent excess* at these Mystic Moments. The chance-expected values for these two sets of harmonics are derived from those used in our Eureka study - the present study being a kind of follow-on from that.

As before, the orbs used for different harmonic aspects were defined by  $12^\circ/n$ , where 'n' is the harmonic number. That was the orb recommended by John Addey in his *Harmonics in Astrology*, and was used in *The Eureka Effect*. What he called the 'fifth harmonic' which included quintile and biquintile aspects gets an orb ( $12/5^\circ$ ) of  $2^\circ 20'$ ; while the 'septile' (here including bi- and tri- septiles - what Addey called the 'seventh harmonic') orb was  $1^\circ 43'$ , i.e.  $12/7^\circ$ .

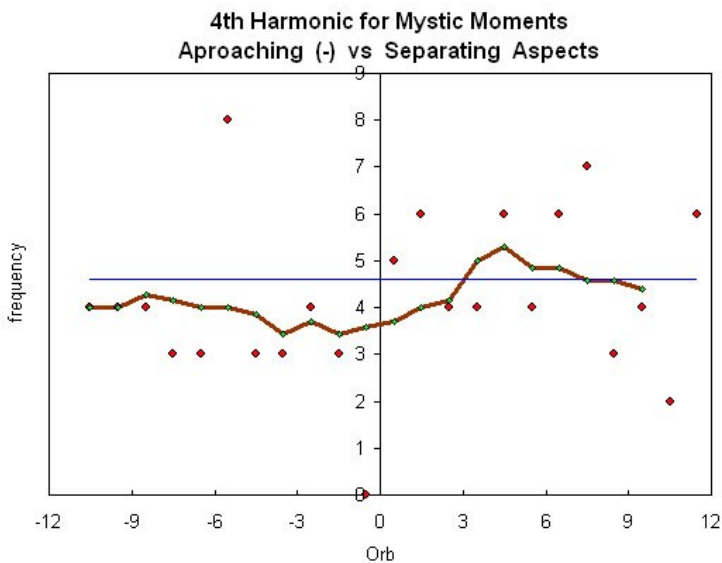


I used the astrology-research program 'Jigsaw' program to count the aspects at different orbs, and totted up all 5<sup>th</sup> harmonic aspects in the group at half-degree intervals (the chance-expected level is here shown). The graph shows very clearly that an orb of just over two degrees was here optimal - a result which confirms the generally-accepted view (eg,

Sue Tomkins in *Aspects in Astrology*) of a  $2^\circ$  orb for the quintile.

Kepler would surely have been pleased to hear that the new aspects he invented came to score so heavily at times of mystic inspiration. He would probably have had some musical explanation for it, in accord with his *Harmonices Mundi* theory.

## Deficit of Squares



The square pattern is traditionally associated with difficulty and stress, with the solid cross of matter and the firm structure of things. We might well expect square and opposition aspects to be in deficit at the rather airy and formless moments of mystical illumination. The Addey formula used above gives squares a 3° orb, and taking that 'Addey orb' gave a 25% deficit in these '4<sup>th</sup> harmonic' aspects, with only

22 in the Mystic Moment group, as compared to a chance-expected value of 29.4. (18) We here take the chance-expected value as 1.96 squares plus oppositions per chart for a 3° orb, see table below.

These hard aspects were grouped according to whether they were applying or separating. The graph shows this, with time moving from left to right. It reveals a big deficit in oppositions and square aspects that were *applying*, i.e coming up to exactitude. Taking eight degrees of orb, gave *75% more separating aspects than applying*. This effect might endorse the 8° orb recommended by Sue Tompkins' book on Aspects, for squares and oppositions, and indicates that the mystic moments tended to avoid the applying, hard aspects. The graph shows a seven-point moving average put through the data, of aspects summed per degree of orb. (4.8 is the chance-expected level). One cannot here apply a significance test, because no-one predicted it in advance.

## Other Aspects

The trine aspect, using the 'Addey orb' of 4°, showed only a slight excess, of 29 compared with 25 expected. The 8<sup>th</sup> harmonic, which includes semi-squares, squares and oppositions, showed a *35% deficit* (scoring 24, with 38 expected), a deficit comparable to that found for squares and oppositions with a larger orb. In general, the odd, prime-number harmonics 3 - 5 - 7 seemed to score positively

for the mystic moments, while the more 'structural' 2 - 4 - 8 even harmonics were in deficit.

## Discussion

This investigation has demonstrated the working of celestial aspects. It has successfully replicated the result obtained in the Eureka research by this writer and Mike O'Neill. These results indicate that **the condition of the heavens does in fact contribute to the arrival of mystical insight.** It tends to confirm that the Addey orbs are OK for small aspects but unduly small for the major ones.

There is a big gender imbalance in those who experienced these events, which is shared in common with the Eureka data. The harmonic patterns suggests that moments of mystical experience might have something in common with the scientific 'Eureka' insight-moments. On a theological note, the last six of these Mystic moments seem not to have involved experience of a Deity, whereas the earlier ones did. I wouldn't dare to comment upon this!

These results support John Addey's concept of 'harmonic' aspects, whereby it can help to score squares and oppositions together, like the quintiles plus biquintiles. Our investigation of Eureka moments years ago found generally that the effect of applying aspects was more significant than that of the separating aspects and the effect here seems to be comparable, with a deficit of applying hard aspects.

The other large effect found was an excess of quintile aspects, and why should that be? The meaning of mystic experience is said to be nonverbal, or not easily formulated, and so an answer to that question may best be conveyed silently, by the pentagram-diagrams here shown. (19) The patterns of the pentagram have a vibrant energy that is rather extravert, somewhat like a flower burgeoning, and does this call for some re-evaluating of the rather inward and silent experience of the mystic? Maybe we need someone like Giordano Bruno to come and explain how the pentagram-energy works in this manner. In one of the diagrams, an infinite series of pentagrams is present: each touches the next, shrinking at each step in the Golden Ratio, as they stretch out along the arms of the big pentagram that contains them. One might have expected moments of notable mystic illumination to have more septiles and the scientific Eureka moments to have more quintiles but ... it was the other way round.

In the meantime, if any readers know of any other such moments (which are in some way documented) or can improve upon the timing of any here given, I'd be grateful to hear from them.

## References

1. *Kindred Spirit*, Vol. 81, July/Aug 2006.
2. My source-books were: William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), Richard Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness*, 1901 and Margharita Lasky, *Ecstasy*.
3. Dole & Kirven, *A Scientist Explores Spirit, a biography of Emanuel Swedenborg*, 1997, p.39, Chapter, 'The Turning-Point'
4. Bucke (2), p.225-7.
5. James (2), p.209; Edward & Dwight, *Life of Brainerd*, New Haven, 1822, 45-7.
6. Burke, p.292.
7. [www.martinus.dk/layout\\_pages/index.php?lang=uk](http://www.martinus.dk/layout_pages/index.php?lang=uk), ; Uwe Todt, Martinus: *Leben und Werk*, Novalis Verlag, 2007, p.40.
8. <http://intyoga.online.fr/siddhi.htm>
9. James Gordon, *The Golden Guru The Strange Journey of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh*, 1987 MA p.24.
- 10 *The Other side of the Mountain*, The journals of Thomas Merton, Vol 7, 1999, p323.
11. Edgar Mitchell, *The Way of the Explorer, An Apollo astronaut's journey through the Material and Mystical Worlds*, NY 1996, p.59.'
12. [www.philipkdick.com/aa\\_biography.html](http://www.philipkdick.com/aa_biography.html) Philip Dick, *Valis*, NY 1991. The experience began on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
13. M. de Looze wrote an e-book 'the Stars are Falling' about this experience. For an astrological report on this moment, see <http://travelswithmyteenager.blogspot.com/2008/03/ufo-conf-pt-2.html>.
14. <http://oshana.org/daveoshana.html>
15. Aburrow: [www.pagan-network.org/forums/index.php?topic=25038.msg244764#msg244764](http://www.pagan-network.org/forums/index.php?topic=25038.msg244764#msg244764)
16. Mike O'Neill and N.K., *The Eureka Effect*, 1996, p19: a first edition was published in 1988.
17. <http://faculty.vassar.edu/lowry/tabs.html#csq>
18. Computed by:  $42 \times 2 \times 8/360 = 1.87$  per chart (See ref. 16, p.18).
19. Diagrams as geometry of crop-circle patterns: <http://www.hypermaths.org/cropcircles/chapter5/>

## Appendix

The Jigsaw program was used for generating control groups, 5000 at a time over the period 1950 – 2010 – when a large proportion of the mystic moments happened. The table displays the expected number of aspects per chart, comparing these with those found for the Eureka project, the latter being estimated over a 3-century period.

Harmonic	Trine	4 <sup>th</sup> H.	Quintile	Sept	8 <sup>th</sup> H.
Orb (degrees)	4°	3°	2° 24'	1° 43'	1°30'

Theoretical	1.87	2.1	2.24	2.42	2.47
Eureka	1.73	2.01	2.19	2.41	2.56
Est. 1950–2010	1.63	1.94	2.16	2.46	2.51

Nick Kollerstrom: Mystic Moments  
<http://cura.free.fr/cura2/908nick1.pdf>

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