

# The Many Faces of Venus:

**The Planet Venus In Ancient Myth and Religion**  
(2001) by Ev Cochrane

A Review/Commentary by Eric Miller



*The Many Faces of Venus: The Planet Venus In Ancient Myth and Religion*, attempts to rekindle the mid-century theories of Immanuel Velikovsky (*World's In Collision*, 1950), as well as those of D. Talbott (*The Saturn Myth*, 1980), who took Velikovsky's views as the starting point for his own "reconstruction" of ancient myth and history. The author would seem to be adding his own name to the work of Velikovsky and Talbott to comprise the trio who has definitively explained the origins and trappings of ancient myths and religious beliefs, rituals, and paraphernalia.

Many readers are aware of Velikovsky's views, far fewer are aware of Talbott and Ev Cochrane's work. Suffice it to say, that Velikovsky promoted the view that the planet Venus (as a proto-comet) came into a near collision course with planet earth and caused, perforce, cataclysmic upheavals throughout the world. In its day, *Worlds In Collision*, caused a great sensation throughout the world's reading public and, consequently, was routinely trounced by establishment cosmologists and mythographers alike. By the time Talbott came along a couple of decades later, Velikovsky's work was already passé in the minds of most and Talbott's own theories appeared to many as far more fantastical than Velikovsky's own "beyond the pale" opinions and

theories. Talbott's work (following Velikovsky's incipient view) begged credence for the view that the planet Saturn once appeared in the sky as a second "sun" – a sun which had a different orbit than it does today and which appeared as a huge gaseous mass, rivaling the sun in its dominance in the ancient heavens. How long the alleged "two suns" rivaled each other is not much discussed by the author, we are told however that the visual phenomenon probably existed for "several thousand years."

The author's work attempts, in part, to tune Talbott's "Saturn paradigm" to consonance with his own views concerning the part played by Mars in the great celestial configurations and appearances. ("There is a wealth of evidence that Venus and Mars also participated in the polar configuration associated with Saturn. According to the reconstruction offered by Talbott and myself, the planets Mars and Venus originally appeared in close proximity to Saturn. . .")

One must not think that the author of *Venus* is unaware of the effect that his pronouncements are liable to make upon the reader. Indeed, he remarks, concerning an aspect of the Saturn prominence view, "this statement," the author writes, "will doubtless strike most readers as extreme to the point of absurdity. It can be shown, however, that the superimposition of the Venus-star upon the disc of Shamash [the planet Saturn] properly understood, is enough to warrant a wholesale rethinking of conventional theories pertaining to the recent history of the solar system." Quite a large statement in itself it would seem. Obviously, Velikovsky's view itself, if accepted, "is enough to warrant a wholesale rethinking of conventional theories." In fact, I think we are safe to observe in many quarters this "rethinking" has been going on for over on half a century. Of course, the key to the author's remarks is the qualifier "properly understood,"—which can only mean understanding it as he himself interprets it.

The author makes no bones about his position. All previous theories (previous to himself, Talbott and Velikovsky?) of mythology have failed, we are told, "precisely because they overlooked (or ignored) the prominent role of planet-induced-catastrophes. It is the catastrophic context of ancient myth, coupled with the fact that the extraordinary events in question were projected large and loud in the skies overhead, which alone explains the undeniable fact that myths around the globe share certain motifs in common, many of which –

such as fire-breathing dragons or pole suns—are of a thoroughly anomalous nature” (pg. 90).

The author seems to hang his hat more on Talbott than Velikovsky’s contributions, despite that fact that Talbott views are virtually unthinkable without Velikovsky. (Talbott himself points to the fact that his own theories developed along Velikovsky’s lines.). But, as to the Saturn theory, upon which Cochrane’s own theories would seem to turn, he himself realizes that the view he is presenting to the reader is clearly bizarre at first view. (“Although the Saturn theory is so bizarre at first sight that it may well seem more suited to a work of science fiction than to a work purporting to reconstruct the recent history of the solar system, the theory can be supported by a wealth of evidence and by employing conventional rules of logic.”).

Such remarks would seem to suggest that Cochrane himself realizes that more “wealth of evidence” is required for his theory and he promises to produce additional whole volumes to buttress his views, which he himself, as said, realizes will strike the reader as “absurd,” or “bizarre” on first reading. Obviously, we can here only turn to the volume we have at hand, not those intended to be produced.

Whatever one ultimately thinks of the so-called Saturnalian paradigm and its relationship to Velikovsky and Cochrane’s and Talbott views, we can justly assert, that the author makes a meritorious contribution to the subject of Venus worship in the ancient world and its linguistic and mythological relationship to cataclysmic theory of astral events within man’s cultural history—whether or not his own “take” on Mars’ role in the celestial mechanics of the event is seriously considered.

The author aptly begins presentation of his additional evidence for global cataclysms with a discussion of the poem by arguably the oldest poetess in history, Enheduanna. Enheduanna (the daughter of Sargon) is the author of the so-called *Exaltations of Inanna*, Inanna is the Venusian goddess of the Sumerians. Hence the author begins with the earliest strata of mythopoetic pronouncements regarding the story of the history of Venus –and

Venus in the guise of an all powerful and revengeful goddess who creates chaos in heaven and on earth.

*Cochrane's Contribution*

Although many scholars and commentators, since Velikovsky, have addressed the subject matter of myth and its relationship to man's experience of cataclysms and mankind's cultural history, the author has done an excellent job of significantly expanding the "data base" with such chapters as "Venus in Pawnee Lore," "Venus in Ancient Art," the "Venus-comet," the "Witch- star" the "Eye-Goddess" and other chapters which serve as a kind of "preamble" to the path to his chapter "Towards A Natural History of Mythology." Certainly, the author is not the first to address these issues, nor will he be the last [in the interests of disclosure, this writer, too, has been researching and writing in the same field for decades]; but Cochrane appears to be the first (so far as I know) to deal extensively and explicitly with the single subject of Venus and ancient cataclysms and thus, considerably expands on much that is found in an

almost embryonic form in Velikovsky's *Worlds In Collision*. The author also often generally bases his work on more credible sources than Velikovsky sometimes used, to a fault. Where Velikovsky often provided a mere few sentences, Cochrane provides paragraphs. Hence, to the author's credit he significantly updates and expands the debate.

Take, for example, the subject of Venus as the "Eye" of the God. Cochrane makes use of Anthes (1961) finding that the "Eye of Re" in the Coffin Text, is undeniably another cognomen of Venus. Anthes, though unequivocal in his findings, has no means of explaining why the "daughter" goddess of the great God Re, Venus, should be called the "Eye of Re." Nor can Anthes explain how the "Eye" god could go on a rampage, mercilessly devastating the world, in its guise as the divine "Lady of Slaughter" who not only causes massive destruction but thrives on the deaths she causes. It is true that the author seeks to appropriate Anthes identification of the Morning and Evening Star into his Saturn theory, but, with or without the Saturn theory, the authors research adds significantly to Velikovsky's early identification of the great "Eye" of antiquity as the planet Venus.

Having studied Chinese sources for Venus worship in ancient China for a number of decades, this writer can offer here additional evidence for the

“Eye” of heaven as Venus, corroborating Cochrane’s findings. Simply, the Goddess Ba (sometimes “Pa”) is the daughter of Hwang Ti, she, too, goes forward in defense of the Great God and uses her extraordinary powers to destroy the enemies of Hwang Ti. Cochrane will not be surprised at all, one can imagine, that the “Eye Goddess” of ancient China has many characteristics and qualities in common with her Egyptian counterpart. Just as Re had to call back his daughter because her destructiveness was too great that he feared she would destroy the world, so, too, it is the case with Ba and Hwang Ti. And the author will also not be surprised to learn that Ba was colored “green” (the author emphasizes that green was a dominant color assigned to Venus) and that she had “the power to store a great deal of heat in her body.” which allowed her “to radiate outwards into the and rains.” Ba caused the rebel Chi You’s forces (i.e., Master of Wind and Master of Rain) to flee and caused a bright sun to shine over the battlefield. For these reasons Ba is known as the Drought Goddess. For reasons unknown she remained on earth and was widely feared for her powers to kill.

And here I only scratch the surface of Venus associations which are analogous to the characteristics and “patterns” of the Venus “Eye” prototype dealt with by the author. For example, the author asserts, following Anthes that the Eye of Re, Venus, was identified with the color green. Venus was known, he shows, as the Green God in various cultures (i.e., Sumerian, Akaddian, etc.). “That Venus was widely associated with the color green has been documented by us elsewhere. An early example of this motif occurs in ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Underworld;’ there the planet Venus, as Inanna is described as hanging upon a great wall and as being of a putrid green color. In Babylonian astronomical texts Venus was known as the ‘Green star.’” Elsewhere the author apprises the reader that this “green” star was also related to food. Interestingly, in China we find the story about the “Eye-meat” that was fed upon (without being diminished) by celestial beings for nourishment. This, too, is undoubtedly another—here a Chinese example—of a bizarre story with absurd descriptions which Cochrane forewarned would be the reaction of many an initial reader.

This is not the place for this writer to offer example after example after example from my own amassed Chinese sources contained in my manuscript *Venus Worship In Ancient China*. Undoubtedly, there is much material that Cochrane can easily draft into service for his work from ancient

China. In any case, Cochrane offers a cornucopia of new information from the ancient which, certainly in this writer's view, adds credence to the view that these "astral" cataclysms in mankind's cultural past, real or imagined, undoubtedly focused on Venus. And I will go so far as to say that after carefully reading Cochrane's book I am somewhat dispossessed of my previous almost knee-jerk rejection of the Saturn paradigm. Not that I am, by any means, won over to it, but, when pressed to the wall, I would have to confess I have no specific knowledge derived from my independent studies to dismiss the Saturnian view without giving it a fair hearing. So, from that point of view, the author has given me pause to not just dismiss the Saturn and Mars connections proffered by the author as being too "absurd," or too "bizarre" (as I confess I did prior to reading the author's *Venus* book.)

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**Ev Cochrane's website is [www.maverickscience.com](http://www.maverickscience.com)  
where his work can be further examined and his books purchased.**