

## Square Yod or Thor's Hammer – What's in a Name?

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When I first discovered that Solar Fire had included the formations identified in an article I wrote for The Astrological Quarterly I was pleased to think that more members of the astrological community would become aware of this work. In due course I received a copy of the software, looked at all the additional formations listed, and quickly realised that the Solar Fire team had included not only "our" formations (as published in the article) but also formations from work published by the Hubers. The one that leapt out at me was a form that Linda and I had provisionally named the "Square Yod" and the Hubers called "Thor's Hammer" The Hubers' name, which seems to be the one most used at present, just didn't seem to fit the way Linda and I had been interpreting the formation.

### Why does the name of the pattern matter?

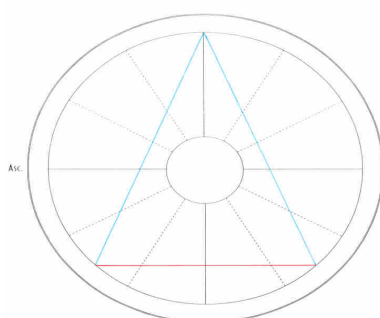
As time has passed it has seemed more and more that other astrologers have built their interpretation on the name of the formation rather than really studying for themselves the way it operates. Some of them have actually focussed on the alternative name "God's Fist"! This matters because the differing names have actually stemmed from two completely different ways of interpreting charts - one which I would call "holistic" and the other "analytic". Put very simply, the holistic chart view sees all the planets, points and patterns as tending to pull together to make a coherent whole, while the analytic view separates out the aspects and patterns and analyses them individually before trying to stitch them all back together into a single interpretation for the client/querent.

I said in the articles published in The Astrological Quarterly that Linda and I were developing a new way of seeing charts - as overall patterns rather than collections of aspects. Part of this new vision involved seeing patterns as members of groups or families, rather than stand-alone entities.

So, in the view of Linda and me, the symmetrical three and four point patterns effectively fall into one of three families - Triangles, Squares and Trapezoids (or Keystones). More complex patterns that we have found are built from these three families. The three families could be said to have differing functions:

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| Triangles  | focus energy to create opportunities or openings.<br>The exception is the Grand Trine which produces no individual focus, but instead shows a flow of energy around the signs/planets involved. |
| Squares    | indicate friction between the signs/planets, generally showing problems that need solving, although they can also cause instability or sudden activity in extreme cases                         |
| Trapezoids | fix the energy into a stable or "holding" pattern which is often at the core of the horoscope.  |

When you view the Square Yod/Thor's Hammer in this way there are two possible families it could belong to - the Triangles and the Squares.



Square/Sesquiquadrate (Wedge) Yod 4½:4½:3

If you consider it to be Thor's Hammer, the way its action is described by the Hubers, this makes it a distorted or foreshortened T-Square and it takes its place with T-Square and Grand Cross in the "Square" family.

Viewed as the Square Yod it becomes part of the "equal-side" triangle formations, which begin with the "Sliver" or "Quindecile" Yod, and gradually develop (as the equal-side aspects get closer/shorter) through the "True" Yod, then the Quintile and Square Yods to culminate in the Grand Trine.

However, since each chart represents only one particular moment in time no astrological formation is entirely static; as the planets move around the skies one pattern flows into another.

So, when determining which family to put a particular formation into it is necessary to consider what it might develop into in the next few hours or possibly days, given the relative speed and direction of travel of the specific planets involved.

In the case of the Square Yod, that means first considering whether the Apex planet is moving faster or slower than the two square planets, and whether it is direct or retrograde, and then applying the same test to each of the planets forming the square base. In the majority of outcomes no specific symmetrical figure is formed, but where it can be tested - say with the Moon or Mercury, either direct or retrograde, being involved then the next figure formed will be either a True Yod or a Grand Trine. The only way a T-Square could be formed would be with the Moon at the apex and a retrograde Mercury or Venus holding either or both of the "square" points of the base, and in this case it would be, by definition, a comparatively weak and transient pattern.

This test therefore would put the figure firmly in the Triangle rather than Square family - and therefore make it a Square Yod rather than a Hammer.

So, astrology folks, the decision is yours - is the **4½:4½:3** figure a Yod or a foreshortened T-Square? Over to you.

Just one final comment - Linda and I never did decide on a "formal" name for the pattern. We considered several, and of those maybe we should have used the one we first thought of - the "Wedge" Yod; that might have had a chance in the popularity stakes against Thor's Hammer!