

## The Nodal Cycle: From Ptolemy to Rudhyar

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**Note: there will be time for examples from the audience. If you wish to participate, please give Lee your birth data before the start of the lecture.**

## Rudhyar defines the Nodal Cycle

- Whether a planetary node, or the Moon's node, the cycle begins at the Ascending Node (the North Node, in the case of the Moon)
- Within this cycle:
  - The North Node is the point of intake
  - The South Node is the point of release

## In the Beginning...

Ptolemy said, "Again, if the luminaries, together or in opposition, move toward the maleficent planets upon the angles, or if the maleficent planets move toward the luminaries, particularly when the moon is at the nodes or her bendings, or in the injurious signs..., there comes about deformations of the body such as hunchback, crookedness, lameness, or paralysis..."\*

\*Ptolemy, Claudius. 2nd Century A.D. Tetrabiblos. Translated by F. E. Robbins. Harvard University Press: Cambridge. 1971.

## Release of What?

"One of the most significant ways of thinking of the nodes is to consider them as two 'gates.' When a planet is at its north node, its essential function and quality in the solar system is focused upon our Earth-space which is then most able to absorb and assimilate it. When the planet is at its south node what is released as 'substantial' factors are the results of the relationship between the characteristic nature of the planet and whatever in the Earth-space has absorbed its power.... As to the moments when the planet reaches the points of maximum latitude, these represent turning points or moments of inner decisions."\*

\*Rudhyar, D. (1976). *Person centered astrology*. Lakemont, Ga., CSA Press.

## What's a Bending?

- A winding of a river
- Flexing or bending of a limb
- A turning point in a race
- A sudden change in a musical passage
- The points square the Nodes

## Commentary by Alexander Ruperti & Marie Cavaignac

"One may say, by analogy, that the hemicycle which goes from the South Node to the North Node, with the Moon in southern latitude, corresponds symbolically to the seasonal period Autumn-Winter. It is the period in which the results come to pass. This corresponds to the *liberation* of the seed, and the *discharging* of undesirable elements, or of the loss of creative initiative under the compulsive weight of habits and unconscious automatism.

"And the hemicycle which goes from the North Node to the South Node, when the Moon has northern latitude, corresponds symbolically to the seasons Spring-Summer. This is the period in which one *receives* the new energies which are *assimilated* after the point of maximum northern latitude."\*

\* Ruperti, A. M. C. (1984). Les multiples visages de la Lune. Paris, Éditions universitaires. Translation J.L. Lehman.

## The Four Parts of the Cycle

- Reception (North- going North)
- Assimilation (North- going South)
- Liberation (South- going South)
- Discharge (South- going North)

## What makes a Cycle Aristotelian?

- Aristotelian cycles are 2 x 2 matrices, with one property of being, and one property of becoming.
- This produces a dynamic system that allows transmutation of elements.
- This produces one and only one sequence of steps – rather a built-in arrow of time.

## This is an Aristotelian Cycle!

- This process defined is explicitly the same as the kind of cycle Aristotle defined in *On Coming to Be and Passing Away* (also called *On Generation and Corruption*).
- The latter cycle is the cycle of the four elements, applied to the seasons, and used constantly in medical astrology.

## Compare Keywords for Nodal Cycle with Traditional Digestive Cycle

- Reception (North-going North)
- Assimilation (North-going South)
- Liberation (South-going South)
- Discharge (South-going North)
- Attraction
- Alteration
- Retention
- Expulsion

## Seasonal Qualities

Air	moist becoming hot	Spring
Fire	hot becoming dry	Summer
Water	cold becoming moist	Winter
Earth	dry becoming cold	Autumn

**Table 2-9.** The elemental properties

## Moon Conjunct the North Node

- The point of intake is the North Node
- This corresponds well with classical delineation, because that which is eaten *increases* the size or energy of the body
- The creation of "new" systems that begin a cycle.
- But these systems may not in fact be new, and may not in fact accomplish that which the inventor intended.

## Moon North - North

- Action, systematizing, courage; the "right stuff."
- There is an emphasis on philosophical purity.
- Contact with the divine is like that of a priest: a mediator for the redemption of others.
- The challenge is to bring in the knowledge or feelings of others to create a system.

## Moon conjunct the South Node

- The hero is the dictator for the collective.
- It often is difficult and it is generally accompanied by a degree of self-confidence which borders on, or crosses over to, megalomania.
- The hero (usually, yours truly) has become the agent for the collective.
- For the rest of us, who do not occupy the world stage, this configuration can denote someone who is willing to completely throw out the *status quo* in the process of building a new system.

## Approaching, then conjunct the Northern Bending

- The individual becomes the embodiment or personification for a theme which permeates the era.
- However, prominence does not necessarily equate to popularity, or "success" as we might be tempted to define it.
- Here we see Lincoln, who worked his way to prominence in a difficult period, as well as Presidents Carter and Hoover.

## South-South

- The quadrant of *liberation*.
- The problem with Rudhyar's biological model is that, after liberation, what do you do for the rest of this half of the cycle?
- You have brought together everything you can. Now your work moves out into the collective.
- But do others understand it? Or do other project on to you, preferring their own myth to what you offer them?
- Whwn the atomic bomb goes off, a lot of energy is released. But anyone at Ground Zero is burned, and likely destroyed.

## Northern Moon going South

- The architect, the engineer.
- This person builds, or pushes a system to the limit, straining the boundaries as far as they will go.
- The second Quadrant is the phase of *assimilation*, in which the substance brought in by the first Quadrant (digestion) is incorporated into the body.
- This is carrying of an idea to its logical limit, which is rather like the testing of a physical building.

## The Southern Bending

- The pinnacle of subjectivity
- Everything that has been accumulated to this point is synthesized, and then thrown out into the awareness of others.
- The magnitude of the release can make the subject a scapegoat.

## Moon South, going North

- The function of this quadrant is the alchemist; the process is *restructuring*.
- Everything needs to go before the next cycle can begin.
- One becomes the perfect vessel of inspiration or invention: but through elimination.
- And in this moment of reaching, of transcending, one may dare to reach beyond the moment and grasp, or at least intuit, the next cycle.

