

CYCLES, CIRCLES AND PHASES
The Phases in Cycles and What They Mean
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[Disclaimer: The following discussion is about the phases in cycles and learning to recognize them in your daily life. Reader discretion is advised. This is a little technical and probably not for everyone, so feel free to skip this post.]

Your response to the notes on the dark days of the solunar cycle pointed out to me that at least some of you are interested in cycles and their phases, so at the risk of boring the rest of you, I want to share some information about the phases in cycles.

It is pretty much axiomatic that astrology is about cycles and circles, things that go round and return. If you think about, it those things that do not return or cycle are singletons and we never hear from or see them again. They are just here once and then gone. The things we know are those things that return again and again making themselves known to us by restating or positing themselves endlessly. They endure and exist.

When we reach the point of no return in anything we by definition no longer have anything coming back. It is no different from investing money and earning interest. Any investment for which we get no return means we lose any interest we might have. Get the point? It is only those things that endlessly return or cycle that make up our attention and the world we know. All else is the unknown and unknowable.

We can safely say that astrology is about cycles, circles, and their circulation. And if it is pretty much all cycles then it is very worthwhile to understand how the phases that occur in any cycle work, how cycles are made up, so let's be clear on what cycles are and how cycles work.

Everything (as mentioned above) is cycles, like the cycle of the breath, the cycle of the heartbeat, the cycle of the rotation of the earth, Earth orbiting the Sun, the Moon cycle, the synodic cycle of Mars and Jupiter, and ad infinitum. And every cycles has phases and what is most important, what makes learning about cycles so much easier, is that the phases of any and all cycles are identical. Learn something about the phases of one cycle and you automatically know about the phases of all cycles.

And cycles have no beginning or end. You can start anywhere in a cycle and go around to return to where you started. Every point or degree in a cycle or circle is both a starting point and an ending point. This explains why the Buddhists don't believe (or care) about beginnings or endings because everything is beginning-less and endless. This is no absolute point of origin, no beginning to the universe except as a materialist imagines. Let's take the breath or a heartbeat as an example.

The breath (or heartbeat) can be seen to start at the outbreath, the point when the lungs are as compressed as possible, proceed to inhale to the fullest expansion, and then breathe back out to the full exhaustion of the breath, and so on as long as we live. When we breathe out and don't inhale again, we stop living. Same with the heartbeat.

Planetary synodic cycles are no different, like the solunar synodic cycle each month -- the

phases of the Moon. The Moon and Sun start with a perfect conjunction at the New Moon, gradually separate or expand their angular separation until the point of greatest expansion or separation at the Full Moon, and then continue on around back to the next New Moon. And again. Astrology is the study of cycles and their phases.

And we can analyze or break down the phases in a cycle as fine as we have the interest. Here in the west most of us break the monthly solunar cycle into the four quarters, the Full and the New Moon, and First and Last Quarter moons. Some even divide the cycle into eight parts or sections. In India and Tibet they divide the solunar cycle into thirty parts, each of which constitutes a separate lunar day and carries its own meaning. It is the meaning of the phases that can be helpful to learn.

What is wonderful is that those of you who have studied astrology already have done most of the work in understanding cycle phases. All you need to do is to link up what you now know about the Zodiac Signs and astrological Houses with the corresponding phases within cycles – any cycle.

That's right, the twelve Signs of the Zodiac and the Twelve Astrological Houses are also just phases, the zodiac signs reflecting the orbit of Earth each year around the Sun and the houses reflecting the daily 360-degree rotation of the earth on its axis. I will postpone a discussion of the fact that all circles are really spirals, although this needs to be understood at some point. Here we will just consider cycles as circles. For example:

We have to line up the cycle of the zodiac with the cycle of our breath or heartbeat (any cycle). And before you send me a flock of emails telling me that I have lined these two cycles up wrong, please remember that in cycles there really are no absolute starting or ending points and that it can make some kind of sense (perhaps to you) to line Aries up with this or that part of the breath cycle and so on, so be my guest.

A careful study will show that traditionally the sign Aries best fits with the point of the First Quarter Moon, which fits with the First House, which fits with the halfway point in inhaling, and so on. This places the zodiac sign Cancer (in tarot, the 'Chariot') with the fullest or most dense part of the cycle, the point of greatest inhalation, and Capricorn with the most inward part of the cycle, corresponding to complete exhalation.

You are free to match these circles as you wish of course, as mentioned earlier. What you do in the privacy of your own mind is up to you. But if you examine the theory of correspondences, the best fit is the one pointed out above where Cancer is fullness (a summer sign) and Capricorn is emptiness or exhalation (a winter sign), and so on around. That is the tradition at least in the northern hemisphere where most of that tradition seems to have been originally documented.

And all cycles match up, so the zodiac sign Aries and the First House have the same phase and therefore the same essential meaning. Do the math and you will see they correspond. Here are two articles on the meaning of signs and houses that may be helpful. If you don't understand how one sign generates the next, you will appreciate this explained in the following article:

<http://michaelerlewine.com/viewtopic.php?f=146&t=1366&sid=6884c334beccd0dfc6528a7b31ff63ad>

