

Cycles or Circles, Centers, and Circulation



by Michael Erlewine

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INTRODUCTION

This is not intended to be a finely produced book, but rather a readable document for those who are interested in astrology and a few other topics. These blogs were from the Fall of 2019 posted on Facebook.

Michael@Erlewine.net

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By Michael Erlewine

[I got a request from a friend to send him a copy of an article on Deep Space astrology that I wrote back in the 1970s. I include it here to help show that astrology, which is cultural astronomy, offers food for thought and is not just entertainment.]

I have been working with the structure of Deep-Space for nearly 60 years. My good friend Charles Jayne and I were about the only people I am aware of who were interested in the subject back in the early '70s. Of course, there was Theodor Landscheidt, whose every word on the subject is worth reading.

Many astrologers have asked me what is the meaning of points like the galactic and supergalactic centers.

Of course, I could rattle off their coordinates and a few other particulars. But if you are actually interested in understanding the nature of cosmic structure from an astrological point of view, see if you can get through the following. Take it slow and think it through.

A central idea for understanding recent cosmic research is the use and value of various astronomical coordinate systems (geocentric, heliocentric, galactic, supergalactic, etc) as best representing the different levels of our experience. Each system has a center and the word CENTER can mean both the same and yet something different to different individuals. Take our own center, for example.

The center about which our life appears to revolve (for each of us) is sacred to us in its ability to reveal or communicate to us the essence or identity of ourselves. The center for each of us always refers inward to our essence, and yet the center or lifeline of one individual may be a new car at one point in his life, a new wife/husband, or a child at another point.

At each point, the "meaning" of center is inviolate, although the outward form of what we take for our lifeline to the center constantly is always changing.

The different kinds of center may be conveniently expressed in the various coordinate systems of astronomy and their meanings as defined by astrology, which basically is cultural astronomy. Otherwise, it's not astrology. The origin or center chosen should most correspond to the center of gravity, the "kind" of question, inquiry, or level being considered. Thus, for a study of the personal differences, circumstances, and the specific terms of our life, we traditionally use the horizon coordinate system in relation to the zodiac with its familiar Midheaven, Ascendant, Houses, etc.

Studies of the general terms of mankind (Mundane Astrology) involve consideration from the center of the earth or geocentric astrology. This is traditional. For a study of the motion and relation of the bodies in our Solar System considered as a functioning whole, the Heliocentric Ecliptic System with the origin at the sun center would be appropriate. In this coordinate system, we could examine the archetypes of life and consciousness, and in general questions traditionally referred to religion, perhaps more recently also considered by some as psychological. As for me, I call the heliocentric chart, the Dharma Chart, relating to our dharma path.

In like manner, galactocentric and super galactocentric coordinates are appropriate for dynamical studies of the larger or more cosmic structure of our reality. They are all there and all of the time. However, for each of us, there are moments and even days when our awareness is truly cosmic, of or in synch with cosmic dimensions.

There are different levels of truth or reality. What is essential as the kernel of truth to one person may appear to another as one example among many of a larger ordering or structure. When we each refer to the center around which we revolve, we share in the idea of centers and yet different ones among us revolve around or consider what is central or essential differently. We can agree on that.

All reference to different centers (perhaps at different times or different times in our life) simply points out the lack of Identity or, another way of saying this is that these seemingly different levels or centers together (in fact) form a continuum -- a continuing experience or identification, starting within us and reaching toward eternity. The following may help clarify this:

All of these larger systems such as the solar system, the galaxy, and so forth, include us within their reaches like a mother holds a child within her womb. We are the children and particular representatives of the earth, and the solar system, but ALSO of the galaxy, the supergalaxy, and beyond. Their nature, identity, and self are Identical with our own. In fact, it is fair to say that we have come through this "outer space" through all the time there is (and has been) to BE HERE NOW ourselves.

Our day-to-day consciousness continually circulates from more particular awareness of our person to more "cosmic" awareness and back again. We do this all the time. From an astrological perspective, the exercise of various astrological coordinate systems, like exercising our muscles, can serve to remind us that ALL reference to centers (in fact, all referral of any kind) indicates an attempt to achieve identification, the circulation (circle or cycle) of identity -- to RE-MEMBER, put back together, or remind ourselves (and keep in mind) who we already are and have always been.

ALL IDENTIFICATION IS CIRCULATION

In other words, all discovery on our part is self-discovery and what we call "identification," identifying, is in fact circulation! Cosmic events and structure are

a very consistent and most stable reference frame through which to come to know ourselves. The use of these inclusive meta-coordinate systems is not the symbolic process some suggest, but the symbol in fact is also real. We are not working with analogies or, if we are, the analogy is complete down to the specific example through which we discover the virtual process itself -- our body and Life.

What we call Life, "God," or Spirit is no beggar, creating a symbolically true but specifically disappointing creation, such that we should have to "touch up" this creation or somehow make the ends meet. The ends already meet! It is we who will change first our attitude and then gradually our approach to this creation, this so-called Samsara, and eventually realize its better half, Nirvana.

And these changes in attitude on our part, this reorientation in approach to what is unchanging or everlastingly true in life, represent the specific areas where the exercise and use of various astronomical coordinate systems of understanding our life become important to present day astrologers. To discover our own orientation and inclinations -- that we are already (right now!) perfect representatives of all space and all time, acting out in detail through our persons events of a so called "cosmic" nature that occur in space at remote distance and times, yet to us they occur right here. How could that be?

Supernovae and black holes are not simply some ever-distant cataclysmic events but are (rather) part of our own everyday experience acted out in fact by persons within the galaxy of our own experience. The goal of our study and our inquiry into astrology is to re-present and re-veal the nature of ourselves and our intimate circulation, connection, and identity in the heart of the earth, heart of the Sun, heart of the Galaxy, heart of the Supergalaxy, and so on.

In a word, that ALL IDENTIFICATION IS CIRCULATION (a continuity or continuing and circle) and all Inquiry, questioning, and search can but end in the discovery of our own Self whether "writ small" in the corners of our personal struggle or "writ large" across the very heavens itself. And so, again: all self-discovery, all Identification is but re-discovery and simple CIRCULATION.

LOCAL ATTRACTION

As we look into the Sun during the course of a year and describe the qualities of those who are born in the various astrological signs, we succeed in defining NOT the position of the sun, but rather that of the earth in relation to the sun. This is

obvious and as astrologers, this should be second nature to us. And this illustrates an important axiom:

All inquiry into greater (higher) centers does not reveal the nature of that center (in itself), but rather reveals our relationship to that center. This is the alchemy of identity. Be sure you understand this, please. Perhaps, read it again.

In other words, higher centers can only serve to mirror or reflect. Their nature is to reveal to us not THEIR intrinsic nature, but our own. REVELATION of any kind is the sign of communication with greater centers or planes -- revelation, not of some far-off distant entity or "God," but always revelation of ourselves and the spirit in us, here and now.

In a discussion as to the qualities of the centers of the Sun, the galaxy and super galaxy, we are to understand that all inquiry into the direction of the Sun will reveal the nature of the Earth; inquiry into the nature of the galaxy will serve to reveal the nature of our own Sun; and inquiry into the Super Galaxy will serve to reveal the nature of our Galaxy. The idea presented here is that it is the very nature of Higher Centers to reflect and respond, as they embrace more particular or local centers. Higher centers reflect!

At this point, if you are with me, another very significant axiom of astrology emerges:

The experience of physical attraction (traction = to draw across or towards) or gravity is primarily the sign of a LOCAL phenomenon. For instance, we directly respond to the attraction we call gravity of the center of the earth. Our earth responds to the center of the Sun, the Sun to the Galaxy, and so forth. Yet as individuals, we are not aware of the pull of the Sun on the entire earth, or again, the point being made here:

ATTRACTION OR GRAVITY IS ALWAYS A SIGN OF A LOCAL PHENOMENON

Please, think about this.

It will perhaps will make more sense in our practical affairs if we put it this way: a sign of our communication with higher or "vaster" centers (or Spirit or "God") is not a physical gravity (graveness) or attraction, but always an ENLIGHTENMENT, the releasing and accepting of the nature of the particular

terms (terminals) of OUR existence and a release of our experience of duality, in exchange for unity and “oneness.” Knowledge of so-called inner-planes exhibits itself to us through a process of reflection or mirroring of our self RATHER than through the presentation to us of something new that is somehow “Other.”

“Mirroring” means we see our OWN essential nature; the traditional word is “reflection.” When we ourselves begin to reflect, our life changes. And by “Reflect,” don’t think about “thinking,” but rather about mirroring – reflection, as in reflecting something other than ourselves.

In other words, higher-centers (first of all) mirror or reveal to us (reflect our own self) and do not exhibit in themselves a greater intrinsic attractiveness or gravity than we already have. To make this even more obvious, this example:

We each meet in life individuals who have a great impact on us. Following the above rule, those to whom we feel a great attraction toward and who hold great power over us are only a LOCAL phenomenon; they are not really teachers for us. And this is so, because TRUE teachers affect us with their presence by making us realize, not their own, but OUR own essential attractiveness and nature, not theirs.

Please: We need to consider and think about this.

In other words, inquiry into true higher centers reveal to us our own essential attractiveness. In fact, it is the nature of higher-centers to be non-material or non-physical, by definition, meaning: they embrace us. Our inquiry into this realm is limited only by our fear of and reluctance to see our self in their vast mirror and seeing through the back of the mirror has always been a sign of Initiation. To sum this up: Greater (or higher) centers mirror or reflect our own self and nature, revealing to us our essential identity as already a part of a larger whole, and enlightening us of (or from) our “grave-ness” and the burden of an apparent loneliness or separation from that whole.

This is key!

With this idea in mind, let us resume our investigation as to the nature of the Galactic Center (26 degrees Sagittarius) and Supergalactic (1 degrees Libra) centers, etc. We can expect the Galactic Center to exercise considerably greater physical attraction for us than that of the local Super Galactic center. In fact, one

of the identifying features of the galactic center (GC) at work, as revealed in chart analysis (in research by Charles Harvey, Reinhold Ebertin, and many others) is a certain "macho-like" quality, a sense of strength and power perhaps typified in the zeal and self-righteousness of certain extreme religious factions. Or, more simply: the tendency in the qualities of Sagittarius and Capricorn of sternness and physical action or "power." Look for it.

Another way to put this is the great ability and power of the GC as represented (when strongly aspected in the natal chart) to move and attract others. We find this feature in the charts of great political and religious leaders who possess the power to move nations to action. The GC figures in these charts in the traditional astrological ways -- by conjunctions and other aspects to the galactic center.

We may contrast this "macho-like" quality found in the GC to the qualities that indicate the presence of Super Galactic Center (SGC) in natal charts. Here we look to the traditional qualities of Virgo and Libra -- that of care, service, reflection, and love. Perhaps the best representative of the Supergalactic nature occurs in Eastern Buddhism in the idea of compassion and especially in the beloved figure of the Bodhisattva, a being who is literally devoted to the service of all life until ignorance vanishes in every one in complete realization.

Bodhisattvas are awake.

We do not find the SGC as physically powerful and moving as we do the GC. In the west, the traditional god figures (Christianity, Judaism, Islam) are more fierce and full of the "fire and brimstone" approach than of the endless care and service as typified in some of the eastern traditions, as in the concept of the Bodhisattva.

In fact, only in these times we are now living are the "servile" qualities associated with Virgo sun-sign coming to be appreciated as a power in themselves. In other words, the SGC represents a non-material or essentially a more passive power (the power to help things to pass) rather than the more active kind of macho power as seen in the galactic center idea.

In the Bible it repeatedly says "This came to pass; that came to pass" The passive genius is not active in the "doing of things," but rather is active in the "undoing of things" that is: helping things to pass from this world. This is a non-material or spiritual task and genius equally to be valued along with the more active one-who-does-things or brings-things-to-be in this world. We may see

these two archetypes at work in the world, and they may be conveniently studied in their local representatives, the Galactic and Super Galactic centers and planes.

WE ARE "SO INCLINED"

"As Above, So Below ... but After another Manner," familiar as an occult maxim, might be the perfect description of what is involved in the various astrological coordinate systems and their transformations. Let me explain.

It is easy to communicate the concept of "wheels within wheels" (larger systems containing within them nested smaller systems), and this has resulted in the popular idea of the chakras or planes (planets) of our experience and self as an ascending hierarchy of levels, each inclusive of the preceding level. What is NOT generally appreciated but becomes increasingly clear when we examine the actual structure of the various cosmic systems, is not only the idea of larger systems embracing the small systems within them (levels), but that each larger system is also differently INCLINED to the preceding one.

It should be understood that aside from the often-tedious mathematics involved in coordinate transformations, there is an accompanying philosophical or psychological adjustment to be made (and empowerment), a shift in viewpoint, a change in the approach or attitude to the subject. This transformation of coordinates merits our attention. In fact, it is key to proper astrological understanding.

And so, there is not only an expansion in perspective when we move to a larger coordinate system, but also a reordering of our sense of direction. This is what makes it so difficult for an individual to see beyond their present dimension and get a feel for what is perhaps his or her inevitable future. There exists what are termed "event horizons," beyond which we cannot understand how life can go on. An example of some event horizons: puberty, marriage, childbirth, and death, to name a few of the classics. We cannot see beyond our present sphere into what our future might be like in these other dimensions because we cannot help but conceive of these events in terms of our present line of thought (linear), the line along which we imagine we are going now. To pass through these event horizons involves total change and that means reorientation. We do not watch our own change, for we are what is in fact in transition or change. "WE" are changing.

The idea presented here should be obvious: the crossing of an event horizon involves simple reorientation on our part, call it a change of approach, view, or attitude. The new dimension or sphere we enter turns out (after our adjustment or change) to reveal our previous or past life in new light. We see our old behavior and opinions differently with our new approach to life. It is very difficult to communicate the difference to one who has not yet had that experience of reorientation. This is called “initiation.” Or as my first teacher used to spell it “In It I Ate.”

What has changed perhaps most is our INCLINATION. We do not want the same things we did want or want them now in a different manner. We are no longer “inclined” such that we feel the way we used to. Our life now revolves around a different center than before -- a wife or child, for instance. We are differently inclined.

Many of these principles I am presenting here are graphically revealed through the study and exercise of the various astronomical/astrological coordinate systems. For instance: what appears in one system as isolated and singular entities that are apparently unconnected, when viewed in the perspective of another system, define the basic shape of the system itself. How often in our lives does some singularity appear as if an “other” and foreign entity, but later, when we have experienced several of this type, they are recognized as representatives of a kind of group that at first was unfamiliar (and even scary) to us. This same event becomes recognizable to us and loses its threatening quality.

I cannot (apparently) recommend strongly enough the exercise of these various ways or systems for understanding our universe to astrologers practicing today. Here is a list of some of the systems. When you study a coordinate system like the heliocentric coordinate system or the equatorial coordinate system, keep in mind that these systems are more than just numbers. They offer an insight into different areas of life and each can be charted astrological and interpreted. It is amazing that we can do this!

COSMIC SYSTEMS AND THEIR CENTERS – A List

1. Earth/Moon System

2. SOLAR SYSTEM center: sun

3. LOCAL SYSTEM (Gould's Belt) This is a group of some 10.8 stars of which the sun is a member. The Local System, originally thought to be a minute galaxy embedded with the Milky Way, is considered to be an ellipsoid of 700x200 parsecs with the long axis parallel to the New Galactic Longitudes 160 deg/340 and located in the Orion-Cygnus spiral arm. The centroid of the Local System is in Virgo at about 15 degrees 25' minutes, with nodes to the Ecliptic at 10 deg 22' of Sagittarius (North node) and Gemini. The system is inclined to the ecliptic by about 66 degrees. Note – positions are of the Epoch 1950.0.

4. LOCAL GALAXY...The Milky Way. Estimated to contain 10 to the 11th stars, The galaxy is a disc-like structure with a diameter of some 30,000 parsecs, a central ellipsoidal nucleus of about 4000 parsecs, and an average disc thickness of several hundred parsecs. The nodes and center (about 26-degree of Sagittarius) in relation to the ecliptic are given elsewhere. The sun is located some 10,000 parsecs from the galactic center.

5. LOCAL GROUP OF GALAXIES The local group includes about a score of member galaxies...the largest of which is the Andromeda galaxy (M 31). Our galaxy (Milky way) and M-31 revolve around a common center of mass roughly in the direction of 27- degree in the Sign Aries.

6. LOCAL SUPERGALAXY. Our galaxy is part of a vast flattened super system of galaxies some 40 megaparsecs in diameter, with the center (1 degrees of Libra) in the great Virgo Cluster some 12-16 megaparsecs from our sun.

This article just touches upon the value of astrology as a form of cultural astronomy. I published an entire book (“Astrophysical Directions”) on these topics in 1976, the result of years of research on my part into astrophysics. That book is available as a free e-book (“The Astrology of Space”) at this link.

<http://spiritgrooves.net/pdf/e-books/The-Astrology-of-Space.pdf>

Michael Erlewine Michael@Erlewine.net