

THE DRAGON'S TALE: *Symbolism and the Lunar Nodes*

by Brian Clark

A Date with the Dragon

How could we forget those old myths which are to be found in the beginnings of every people; the myths of the dragons which are transformed, at the last moment to princesses; perhaps all the dragons of our life are princesses, who are only waiting to see us once beautiful and brave. Perhaps everything terrifying is at bottom the helplessness that seeks our help. (1)

- Rainer Maria Rilke.

Old myths reveal that most heroes experience a transformational encounter with a dragon at some point in their journey. While you may think that the dragon is your mother-in-law or your boss, in reality it is a metaphorical monster. The engagement with the dragon is an allegory for the times in the individuation process when we wrestle with unsavory sides of the self, parts that we deny or keep secret but that have an uncanny knack of showing up anyway. Jungians call it the shadow, the Freudians' nickname is the id; no matter what we call it, we prefer it to be unnamed. Whatever its name, the dragon-struggle is a psychological truth and one that the ancients continuously scripted into their mythic epics. Before St. George killed the dragon or the chivalrous knight rescued the distressed damsel from the jaws of the monster, this phantasmagorical motif was embedded in the mythological stratum of most cultures. Ancient wisdom knew that the heroic part of each human being has a rendezvous with the dragon at defining points in their journey.

Since the dragon-encounter is such an archetypal reality, we could expect the tradition of the appointment (or the dis-appointment) with the monster to be part of astrological convention. We could argue that the dragon-battle underpins much of our experience of the outer planetary energies. But even before the discovery of the outer planets, the Lunar Nodes incorporated this mythic pattern; in fact, the figure of the dragon or dragon-serpent was central to understanding the complex design of the lunar nodes. Dragon symbolism and mythology enriches our understanding of the

nodes, providing metaphors and images to help unravel nodal complexities. While the head and tail of the dragon has come to represent the North and South Nodes, the dragon-serpent is visible in many other ways, such as the serpentine movement of the True Node through the zodiac, the ouroboros created as the Saros eclipse patterns encircle the globe and the ‘snakes and ladders’ affect of the nodal experience.

To start our exploration I will first turn to the Vedic myth of the dragon-serpent Rahu Ketu that underlies the North and South Nodes and what that tells us about the nature of this axial polarity. (2)

Rahu and Ketu: The Dragon’s Head and the Dragon’s Tail

The Rahu Ketu axis in the birth chart represents your own personal eclipse point; how you struggle with the destiny imposed on you from your past life. (3)

- Komilla Sutton

Dragon symbolism is embedded in the nodal axis through its connection with the demon-serpent Rahu Ketu, who eclipses the Sun and Moon by devouring them. As a time-honored symbol, the demon characterizes the pull of regressive and primitive forces against which the hero struggles. As such it is a positive symbol of the nodal axis in its striving for consciousness and attempt to unite soul with spirit. This union, the eternal homecoming, is often depicted as the ouroboros, the dragon swallowing its own tail, another mythic variation of the nodal cycle. However the most apparent connection between the lunar nodes and the celestial demon appeared in the sacred literature of India in a myth often referred to as The Churning of the Milk Ocean.

In the beginning the gods were involved in a Great War with their demon enemies, the Asuras.(4) Near defeat the gods summoned Vishnu, who uttered the prophecy that the cream of the milk-ocean was the ambrosia that would restore their energy. In order to churn the milk-ocean, the gods needed to use one of the Himalayan Mountains as a churning stick. They could not lift this mountain

themselves, having lost their power, therefore they asked Vishnu if it would be prudent to ask their enemies to help, and in return, to share the ambrosia. Vishnu agreed that he would oversee the project and a truce between the gods and the Asuras was declared.

Now the work could begin. A gigantic snake *Vasuki*, the demon serpent who ruled the underworld, was caught and wrapped around the mountain as a churning rope. As the churning progressed fourteen precious things arrived on the ocean's surface: the Sun, the Moon, the Goddess of Fortune, the Goddess of Wine, the magic tree, the magic cow, the white horse of the Sun and other gems. The last was a famous physician/healer holding the bowl of ambrosia. As soon as the ambrosia appeared, both the gods and their enemies rushed to drink the nectar. A fight broke out and the Asuras seized the bowl of ambrosia. Amidst the mayhem arrived an enchantress who suggested sharing the drink and broke them into two groups, serving the gods first. The gods, being focused on their task, drank all the ambrosia. When the Asuras realized what had happened they became enraged and attacked the gods. However the gods had regained their strength and overpowered their enemies. Vishnu had answered their pleas, even masqueraded as the beautiful woman on their behalf.

The demon-serpent Rahu had disguised himself as a god and drunk the ambrosia. *Surya* (the Sun) and *Chandra* (the Moon) had noticed this deception just as he had taken the ambrosia. They immediately reported this to Vishnu who drew his weapon severing the demon's head. But having drunk the ambrosia he had become immortal. Severed in two, his head remained Rahu, but his lower half, the dragon's tail, was named Ketu. With respect for the two new serpentine immortals, Brahma placed them on the ecliptic. The two parts of the demon, Rahu and Ketu remained furious at the Sun and Moon for their betrayal, and legend says they lie in wait to swallow the Sun and the Moon if they venture near. If the luminaries wander too close to Rahu or Ketu, they are devoured and are taken inside the demon. However since the demon had been dismembered, the Sun and

Moon can escape through the part of the body that has been torn open by Vishnu. When Rahu swallows the Sun or Moon they reappear through the opening, but when devoured by Ketu they must be disgorged.

Rahu and Ketu are divine and exist on the same plane as the planetary gods, just as the lunar nodes exist on the ecliptic like the planets. While the serpentine aspect of the Nodes is at odds with the Sun and the Moon, they are an integral part of the same system. Therefore the Nodes present us with the task of understanding this aspect of our fate: what is the inner dragon that tries to devour solar creativity and identity?

This fanciful tale actually accounts for some astronomical truths. The two nodes are pseudo-planets, as they are seen on the ecliptic. Rahu is the ascending node while Ketu is the descending node. When the Sun is near Rahu or Ketu, the eclipse season comes into being and solar and lunar eclipses occur as the luminaries conjoin or oppose each other. There will always be at least two solar eclipses a year; one near Rahu and one near Ketu, which celestially reenact the mythic enmity between Rahu and the Sun. Eclipses now become aligned with the mythic motif of devouring, a common theme in solar mythology and one Jung ascribed to 'embracing and entwining'.(5)

Astronomically, the lunar nodes are the intersections of the orbital planes of the Moon and the Sun where the lunar orbit crisscrosses the ecliptic. Imaginatively, the nodes are the intersection of the solar and lunar experiences from our physical, incarnate viewpoint. The definition of node suggests points at which a curve cuts across itself, conjuring up the image of eternity. Each node is an intersection of the solar and lunar systems from the earthly viewpoint. I would argue that the lunar nodes are the points where the great planes of spirit and matter intersect, or where spirit passes

through matter, implying that both nodes are vessels of the spiritual life and perhaps why they easily become identified with reincarnation and the eternality of soul.

Heads or Tails

In astrological tradition Rahu is the head of the dragon and the northern pole of the moon's nodal axis. Some western interpretations have likened it to the Sun in that its inclination is to promote the conscious understanding of one's vocation. At this node both desire and destiny are magnetized through forward striving and movement. The heroic urge to be active and to battle the impulse to regress is constellated at this node. Like the head, which is the seat of consciousness and the container of the brain, the North Node is the rational pole and the one disposed towards Heaven. However, the mythic image shows us a severed head, unconnected to the body, symbolic of its disassociation with the earth and incarnation. In its lower manifestation it is the serpent brain, a head without a heart or the unanchored intellect. It is the pole that takes in and devours; yet being severed from the body it is unable to digest or contain. Often North Node experiences are illuminating and awakening but are unable to be integrated or held. The head, hungry for another taste, continues its search for illumination. The North Node is a point of intake and any planet conjunct this point becomes ambitious for new experiences. When Rahu swallows the Sun, it passes quickly through his severed throat. There is an insight, a realization, a heroic impulse, but the enlightenment is hard to hold or sustain. Therefore at the north node the realization and passion pass quickly, as it is almost impossible to prolong the participation with this heightened awareness. The dis-appointment is often followed by return to the South Node. Ironically it is at the South Node where sustenance and encouragement can be contained.

The house position of the Nodes will illustrate the environmental factors that help to shape and influence an individual's destiny. The North Node's house position directs us to consciously

participate in that area of life where both the inner and outer worlds collude in an encounter with our destiny. It is a sphere of life that beckons and invites us into its experiences. Since the North Node is often the place where we momentarily may experience the transcendent and spiritual aspect of the self, its house position maps the place where these experiences might happen. The North Node does not have a cumulative effect; in other words experiences at this place are not sequential, but more arbitrary, and may seem to happen out of the ordinary. The random nature of the North Node may be more to do with its subjective nature and entanglement with the paradoxical world of spirit. Hence the house position of the North Node may suggest the setting where the encounter with the spiritual self occurs. The South Node in the opposite house may describe a familiar place, an area of safety, and a comfort zone which supplies an anchor. However, it is also a place where we can become fixed, caught in the safety zone of our complacency. Therefore it suggests an area we must leave in order to develop and explore our pathway. Therefore another metaphor we could use to define the nodal axis is that it is similar to a tram line: the North Node is the destination, the station where the tram is headed, while the South Node is like the departure point, the station where we embark. The nodal axis is like a track with its well-worn grooves near the South Node.

This southern pole of the axis is homeostatic; instinctually at the South Node we return to stability. It is the counter weight that prevents us from capsizing, the ballast on our life journey. Therefore the nodal axis can feel like a game of snakes and ladders, as once we have experienced the enlightenment of the North Node we slide back to the familiarity of the South Node.

Ketu is the tail of the dragon, the southern pole of the axis which is likened to the Moon and the past. It points to the Earth where it feels connected. At this node we experience instinctive knowledge developed from our understanding of what went before. The South node is a point of release and any planet conjunct this node seeks release in the service of the self. In its lower

expression it is overwhelmed by the past, as here is where we experience the pull of the Great Mother back into the womb. Yet within this familial place are the souvenirs and endowments necessary to make our destiny a success. Like a tail, the South Node is an instinctual relic, often seen to be of little use, but ironically brimming with wisdom. Having been severed from the body the tail holds what has been digested from the past. Yet, for it to be of any use its contents must be disgorged, or they ferment and become toxic. By nature Ketu is a riddle, as its contents are potentially helpful and/or toxic, being up to the individual to become aware of the subtleties. It takes a heroic act to dislodge the contents and employ them in the service of the individuation process. No wonder the hero emerging from the belly of the dragon is a common motif in mythological narratives.



5th Century BCE vase depicting Athena watching Jason emerge from the dragon, Ladon

For example, a 5th Century Greek vase depicts Jason emerging from the belly of the dragon.(6) Athena guards the heroic transformation. While this motif is never mentioned in the extant literature, the vase painting clearly portrays the emergence of the hero from the belly of the dragon, the mythic analogy of dislodging the heroic contents of the South Node.

Christian myth also continued the tradition with iconic representations of saintly Jonah emerging from the belly of the whale, symbolizing the completion of the heroic night journey. Again the imagery is reminiscent of the release of processed and integrated contents of the unconscious at the South Node. Below is a Christian image of Jonah being released from the dragon-fish.(7)



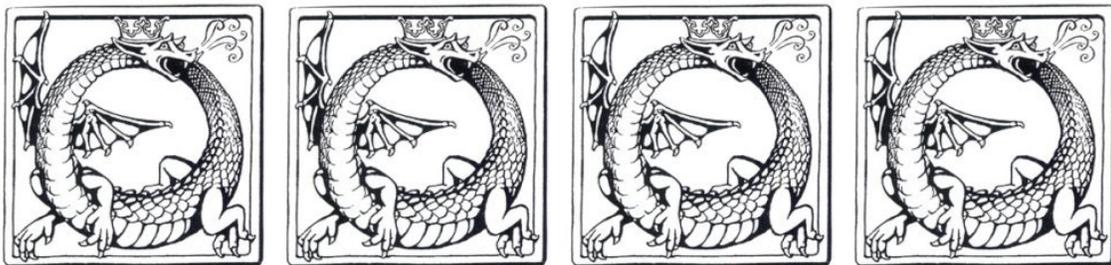
Hand-made fresco by Theophanes of Crete (1527 CE) at Meteora, Greece

To apply this symbolism in delineation, consider the mythic stratum of the South Node. As the container of the past, innate talents, skills and aptitudes may be untapped and undifferentiated. Without consciousness they remain stagnant, unable to be directed advantageously. Hence a heroic act needs to dislodge and distribute this energy so it can be of service. In circulating this energy the potentiality of the North Node is heightened. As this energy is liberated, destiny is petitioned and vocation is more conscious; therefore the South Node is a vital key to unlocking the treasure chest of untapped talents and potentialities. The South Node's sign qualities and house characteristics illuminate the nodal enigma, but it is the natal or transiting planets at the South Node that will help to dislodge the nodal content. Hence transits conjoining the South Node often synchronize with the uprooting and disentangling of past beliefs and images that no longer secure our passage.

The South Node is an innate quality that needs to be disseminated and used freely in pursuit of our destiny. It is providence, inherited qualities from the past that can be used as resources for the future. These well-developed residues need to be dispersed and shared or they become entrapping. The South Node can act as a dissemination point for what becomes conscious at the North Node. In a way the South Node brings to mind the need to contribute this energy to the familial and social realms, the world at large. Since this energy is instinctual it is not necessarily always consciously directed or purposefully used.

Another way to think about the nodal axis is that it is an invitation to participate and co-operate in the life journey. The North Node is where effort must be exerted and where we engage in the repetitive task of becoming conscious of the self. Here is the symbol of opportunity to learn what needs to be developed and made conscious. For vocational purposes we could view the North Node as what demands to be anchored and directed in the world. Unlike the South Node it is not instinctive and therefore needs to be recognised before it can be applied.

The nodes regress through the signs unlike the planets which sequentially move forward through the zodiac. The retrograde movement of the nodes against the zodiacal backdrop alerts us to a different orientation than the planets. At these points in the horoscope the spiritual plane intersects the mundane sphere and along this axis of the horoscope there is an aperture to spirit. In another sense the mundane world is energized by spirit. Hence the nodal axis plays a major role in the destiny of each individual, one that is often difficult to articulate. Its retrograde movement is contrary to the developmental process of the planets. This suggests that the transit of the nodes coerce us into engaging with the sacred aspects of our personal experience by confronting us with the spiritual essence underpinning mundane events. While our life experiences may conspire to split heaven and earth, it is along the nodal axis where the effort to couple the sacred with the mundane occurs. This attempt to join together the head and tail of the dragon is reminiscent of the ouroboros.



Ouroboros: The Eternal Cycle

The ouroboros and the nodal cycle are eternal circles, symbolic of the ceaseless revolution, *samsara*, and the wheel of life. As a dragon or serpent biting its own tail, the ouroboros symbolizes a continuum and cycle of development, self-fertilization, time and an eternal homecoming. The ouroboros, like the nodes, contrasts two ways of being. Serpents and dragons are symbols of the chthonic world, the earthy, impermanent instinctual realm, while the circle implies wholeness and heaven. Hence the ouroboros represents the marriage of the chthonic and celestial spheres, the two poles of the nodal axis. Heaven and Earth intersect; the dragon suggests linear development and the

mundane, while the circle is representative of the sacred, spiral evolution. The serpent biting its own tail represents a cycle of development symbolizing continuity, self-fertilization and the eternal. Like the nodes, the ouroboros symbolises the endless cycle of rebirth, but reminds us of the nodal junction of spirit and matter.

Congregating around the nodal cycle are also the Metonic cycle and the Saros Cycle. The Metonic cycle is the recurrence of New Moons that repeat 19 years apart. The orb for the New Moon repeating in the Metonic cycle is generally within one day and one degree. This is an important consideration in astrological work, as the predictable cycle also links eclipses that might repeat at the same degree. If the New Moon is eclipsed there is also a 75% chance the New Moon will be eclipsed exactly 19 years later yielding a repetition of eclipses at the same degree of the zodiac 19 years apart. This also limits number of lunar placements in a solar return horoscope to 19, stressing the 19-year feeling and emotive pattern in human experience.

The word *saros* is derived from the Greek meaning repetition and is used to describe the recurring nature of eclipse cycles. While the concept of the Saros Cycles was first known to the Babylonians, Cidenas, a Greek astronomer in the 4th Century BCE ‘discovered’ that an eclipse returns after 223 lunations (18 years 10-11 days). Eclipses occur at predictable times and are visible at predictable places on the globe. Each eclipse belongs to a family of eclipses, which have a beginning (the North or South Pole), a middle (the Equator) and an ending (the opposite Pole where it commenced) and a predictable cycle. Each family of eclipses is named as a particular Saros series and each group has a beginning eclipse which occurs either at the North or South Pole (hence N or S). The next eclipse in the series will occur 120 degrees west of the previous one and closer to the equator since the series moves in the direction of the opposite pole. As the eclipses begin to move closer to the equator they occur closer to the lunar nodes, therefore they also move from partial to total eclipses. The closer

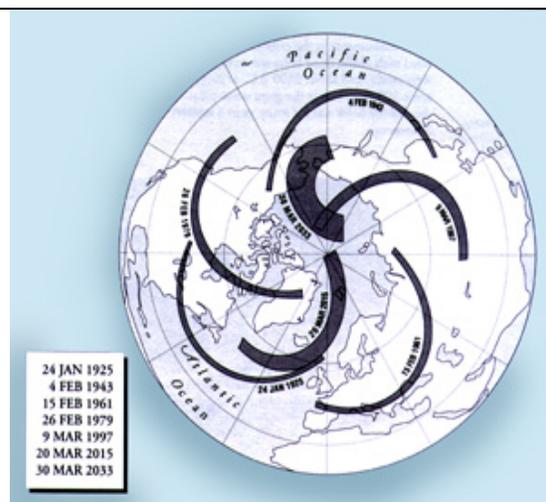
the eclipse is towards the equator (or Node) the more obscured or total the eclipse will be. Each eclipse series spirals around the Earth forming a celestial ouroboros.

Solar eclipses must always happen twice a year. In the annual course of the Sun's journey it will be swallowed by the demons Rahu and Ketu, suggesting that these are the periods when the dragon may be encountered. This is the period when we enter into the shadow lands, the phases of life where we encounter the dragon of our unconsciousness. Nodal transits are pointers to where Rahu or Ketu will attempt to swallow the heroic identity. The house position of the transiting nodes become important to track, as it is in these spheres where the encounter with the dragon is located, casting a shadow across this polarity of the chart.

In an imaginative way, the ouroboros represents Rahu and Ketu and the eclipses. The dragon-serpent biting its own tail is reflected in the Saros pattern: imagine the first eclipse in a Saros series starting at the pole and over the course of its life slowly winding its way around the globe like a serpent. While the ouroboros is a cross cultural image in ancient traditions, it is also a celestial reality: a serpent encircles the world egg just as the eclipses encircle the globe.



Ouroboros: A Serpent Encircling the World Egg



Saros patterns starting at the North pole
www.earthview.com

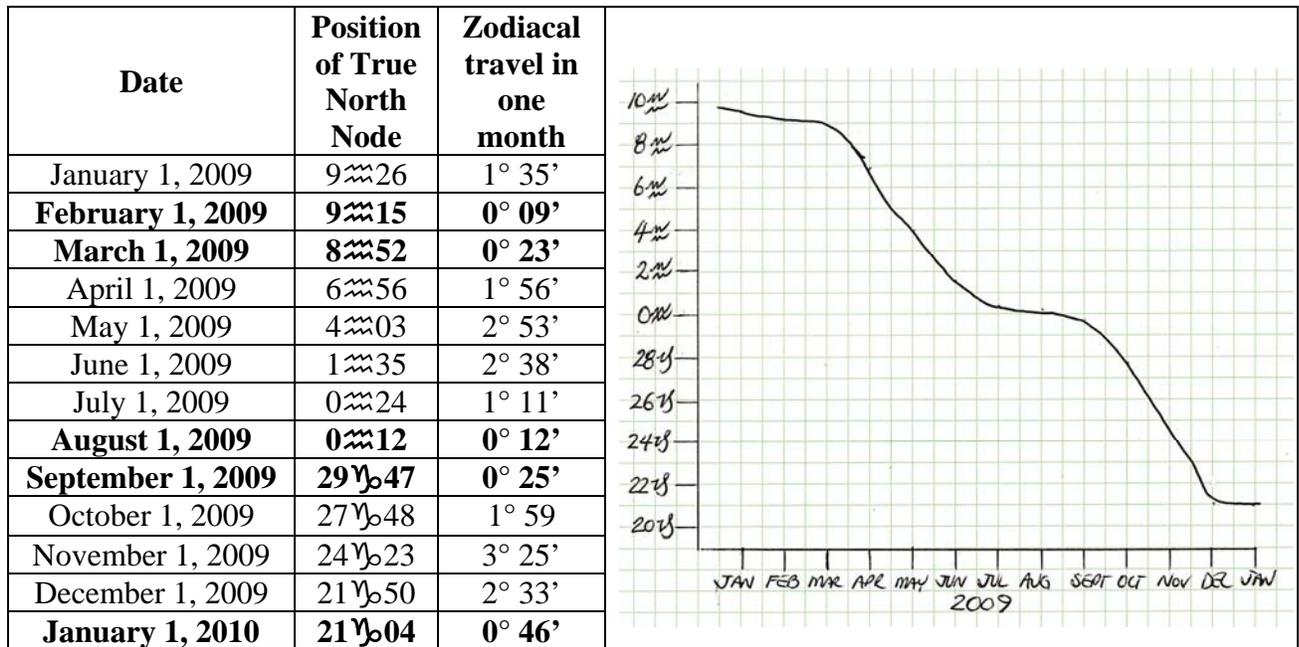
Dragon Cycles: Longitude and Latitude

One complete cycle of the Lunar Nodes is 18.6 years. The Mean Node is the daily average of the 18.6-year retrograde cycle through the zodiac, which is approximately 3' a day. The Mean Node has a harmonic that makes it easy to remember its approximate movement through the zodiac:

- The cycle of the Nodes through the zodiac takes approximately 18 - 19 years
- The transit of the Nodes through one sign takes approximately 18 - 19 months
- The Nodes traveling one zodiacal degree takes approximately 18 - 19 days

In one year the Mean Node will transit just over 19 degrees of the zodiac. The 19-year cycle of the lunar nodes marks important transitions in the life cycle when spirit intersects the mundane. Hence at these pivotal points in the life cycle we either face the dragon of our complacency or are called to our vocation. These are destined moments when it is possible to feel the spirit stir in the world.

The True Node's direction is also retrograde. Because it can be accurately measured it is possible for it to change direction. The True Node moves through the zodiac in its own mysterious way. When plotted on a graph it makes its serpentine way through the zodiac, slithering backwards for about four months, then plateaus near the same degree for 2-3 months and slips backwards again to repeat the same movement. The True Node highlights certain degrees of the zodiac when it plateaus in its serpentine movement backward through the zodiac. Both the Mean and True nodes are revealing in their own unique movement.



The serpentine movement of the True Node through the zodiac in 2009

Another important nodal cycle is the Moon's latitude cycle. This cycle marks the monthly passage of one full cycle of the Moon from its conjunction with its North Node to its next conjunction. When the Moon is on the ecliptic, rising in a northerly direction, it will be conjunct its North Node and the latitude cycle begins. The maximum latitude the Moon can reach is 5°17' above the ecliptic. Approximately 6-7 days or ¼ of its cycle later it will be at its highest point above the ecliptic and will be 90° away from its nodes. Ironically at these times the moon is 'as far withdrawn from the Earth as she can be'(8) yet deeply involved in her own sphere of influence. This period of the cycle was known as the bendings since the Moon was at its maximum latitude and ready to 'bend' or change direction.(9) When the Moon is square to the nodal axis, it is at its bending and of considerable importance in stressing the individual's lunar needs. Another ¼ of the cycle later the Moon will be on the ecliptic again, yet this time moving southward. Here the Moon is conjunct her south node. ¼ of the cycle later she will be at her southerly bending, squaring the nodal axis before she turns to move again towards the ecliptic and begin the cycle again. In essence four distinct quadrants are meted out in this cycle framed by the four cardinal points of the Moon-North Node

conjunction, the northern bending, the Moon-South Node conjunction and the southern bending. Each of these four quadrants is a season of the lunar cycle and offers a more holistic view of the nodal cycle. The bendings complete a fuller picture of the dragon cycle, in essence, another image of the ouroboros.

The Moon's latitude cycle maps the terms of the lunar cycle just as the Sun's declination cycle marks its seasons or the diurnal cycle measures the intervals of light. If we draw a comparison between these cycles, the North Node becomes akin to Spring or Sunrise; the northern bending would equate with Summer or Noon; the South Node is similar in nature to the Autumnal Equinox or Sunset while the southern bending is like the Winter Solstice or Midnight. Seen from the latitude cycle the Nodal axis denotes the rising and setting points of an unbroken cycle.

If we were to complete the picture of the dragon, how would we illustrate the bendings? We know that the North Node is the dragon's head and the South Node is its tail. The northern bending might be the dragon's neck, even its wings, while the South node could represent his belly.(10) Hence the bendings have an equal importance in the nodal cycle as they complete the severed image of Rahu Ketu and offer us a fuller image of the ouroboros of the nodal cycle. The bendings are similar to the solstices in the annual cycle of the Sun,(11) and as such represent the entire cycle of the Moon.

Ninety degrees away from the North and South Nodes are the bendings, important points when considering the nodal axis holistically and as a cycle. In the horoscope, the northern bending is 90 degrees ahead of the North Node in zodiacal longitude, while the southern bending is 90 degrees before the North node in zodiacal longitude. The bendings are the midpoints of the North and South nodes. It is revealing to consider the potency and meaning of these points and how they might be used astrologically. While other planets may not be at that same latitude as the Moon at her

bending, they can occupy the same zodiacal longitude, hence are square the nodal axis. What might natal or transiting planets at the bendings signify in the spirit of the dragon encounter?

From a traditional point of view planets 'at the bendings represent critical issues which can change the flow of life'.(12) No doubt planets at the bendings play a very important role in our destiny, marking turning points in emotional situations, changes of attachments, transitions of home and belonging. But from the dragon's point of view they are archetypal challenges that the hero must encounter. At the northern bending a planet symbolises the influences that earth the desires and ground the intellect. These planets challenge the vocational direction of our lives and demand to be integrated, often shifting the conscious perspective along a new trajectory. At the southern bending a planet represents the quest to locate the storehouse of innate wisdom that can help support the life schema. These planets are vital keys to understanding habitual behavior, instinctual responses and compulsive patterns and summon us to excavate the depth of the self to find the treasure. No wonder I have always seen these planets playing major roles in individual's vocational quests.(13)

It then is no surprise that we also call this cycle The Draconic Cycle, not because of its harshness, but due to its celestial encounter with the dragon.

Dragon Symbolism and the Nodes

The Dragon's Head contains the precious stone, which means that consciousness contains the symbolic image of the self, and just as the lapis unites the opposites so the self assimilates contents of consciousness and the unconscious. The interpretation fully accords with the traditional significance of the dragon's head as a favorable omen.(14)

- C.G. Jung (CW 4:141)

Dragons and dragon slaying are cross-cultural motifs in comparative mythologies that are thematic to understanding the lunar nodes. Metaphorically dragon symbolism ranges from positive to negative. On one hand it can represent the invisible life force that devours time or it can epitomize

the essence of Nature herself, being the spirit and protector of the earth. According to Jung the dragon represented the mother complex or the Great Mother herself. As a totem of the mother complex, the dragon portrayed the urge to regress back to an unidentified primordial state, which often the pull experienced at the South Node.

In its negative manifestation the dragon is the enemy of the hero. As the embodiment of the conscious ego, the hero is attacked by the gigantic dragon, serpent or monster. The dragon is the earth and challenges the hero to remain spirited. Dragons are auto chthonic, guarding the treasures of the land. The hero must fight the dragon to occupy the land; in a psychological sense faces the demons that guard the spiritual treasures and the soul mysteries. Therefore dragons must be overcome to encounter the treasures of the inner kingdom. In killing the dragon the individual becomes enmeshed in the conflict between light and dark. In a developmental way the dragon-battle is with our own destructive forces in order to gain self-mastery. Along the nodal axis we confront the symbolic dragon. In the natal chart we might imagine planets conjunct the nodal axis and at the bendings engaged in the dragon-battle. As the nodes transit the horoscope, we are also invited to face the dragon heroically, and encounter Rahu and Ketu as they swallow both our conscious and reflective light.

References and Notes

(1) Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, translated by Reginald Snell, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1945, p. 39.

(2) As with all myth, many different variants of this narrative exist. The myth, which is first found in the Brahmanas, has been retold in many ways. I have chosen the version from P. Thomas, *Epics, Myths and Legends of India*. D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd., 1961, pp. 89-91.

(3) Komilla Sutton, *The Lunar Nodes, Crisis & Redemption*, The Wessex Astrologer: 2001, p. 3.

(4) In comparative mythologies there is often a battle with the destructive force of the dragon in order for the new order to be brought out of chaos. In our own lives our dragon battle might symbolise the battle with chaos and the establishment of order. Gods fought monstrous dragons in the battle of evolution. In Babylonian creation myth Marduk slaughters Tiamet. Like the nodal

story he cuts the dragon's body in two to represent the poles of heaven and earth. Zeus also fights the monstrous Typhon in the battle with the giants in order for the Olympians to ascend to power

(5) C.G. Jung, *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956, Volume 5, Paragraphs 365-367.

(6) The Athenian red-figured cup is credited to Douris, ca. 470 BCE. Its diameter is nearly 12 inches and interestingly shows Athena, not Medea, watching the hero be disgorged by the bearded dragon

(7) While visiting a monastery in Meteora, Greece one of the resident monks took me aside to show me this fresco, hidden underneath an altar in a locked chamber. Synchronistically at this time the South Node was transiting my Pluto on the IC

(8) Dane Rudhyar, *Person-Centered Astrology*, ASI Publishers Inc., 1976, p. 261. Although Rudhyar does not use the term bendings, he considerably amplifies the latitude cycle of the nodes in an accessible and insightful way. See Dane Rudhyar, *Person-Centered Astrology*, pp. 239- 302

(9) The bendings, first attested to by Ptolemy, are the turning points in the latitude cycle. For amplification on the classical and modern view of the bendings, see Dr. J. Lee Lehman, *Classical Astrology for Modern Living*, Whitford Press, 1996, pp. 202-218. Astrologically we might suggest that the bending stresses the lunar needs and helps to bring what is necessary to consciousness

(10) In discussions with Astrid Fallon, she alerted me to the work of French astrologers Robert Gouiran and Francine Mercier who have used the term Pegasus, Dragon's Wings for the northern bending and the Dragon's Belly for the southern bending

(11) Dane Rudhyar, *Person-Centered Astrology*, p. 253.

(12) Dr. J. Lee Lehman, *Classical Astrology for Modern Living*, p. 207.

(13) In 2008 Esoteric Technologies (www.esotech.com.au) released Solar Writer Vocation which has a chapter dedicated to the Vocation and Destiny, using the Nodal axis and planets squaring the nodes as indicators of a fulfilling vocation.

(14) C.G. Jung, *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963, Volume 14, Paragraph 141.

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