

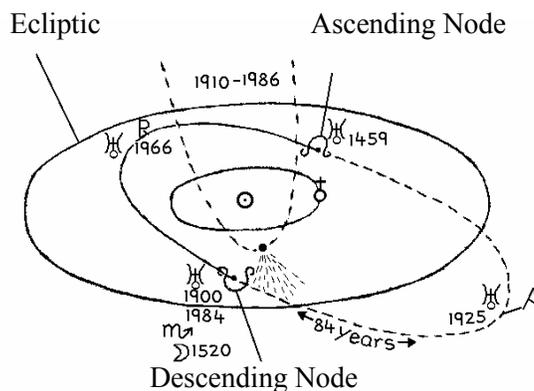
STAR RHYTHMS DURING THE 20th CENTURY - 16 July 1966

Tonight we must look at some of the major star rhythms of the 20th century and in their connection with some of the newly discovered planets. Some of this information has already been touched upon in our Journal.

The planet Uranus is now in its perihelion, which is a major feature of its sphere. All our planets deviate in their orbital planes and form angles in relation to the movement of the Earth, and thus all planets cut through the geometrical plane of the Earth. These points are a spiritual reality and are called the planetary nodes. It takes Uranus 84 years to move round its orbit. The point where the planet is nearest to the Sun is called the perihelion, and its most distant point is called the aphelion. At this moment, Uranus is in its perihelion, as you will see from the diagram. The spiritual beings associated with Uranus work within this orbit. The planetary nodes are where the planet touches the sphere of the Earth in relation to the Sun. Such nodes are gates or bridges into the spiritual world. The Moon also cuts into the ecliptic plane of the Earth in two places, and these may also be called gateways from the astral world into the sphere of the Earth.

When a planet is nearer the Sun, it presents a different constitution than when it is at the greater distance of its aphelion. Anything coming close to the Sun within our solar system comes to a head, so to speak. For example, the comets have a head facing the Sun, with a tail sweeping behind them like a broom, But anything reaching out into space away from the Sun, into the realm of the fixed stars of the zodiac, has a tendency to become limb, and that is the aphelion situation.

Halley's Comet



When we realize that Uranus is now concentrated in the perihelion, it becomes of some significance to our present time, for we live in a kind of state of contraction, whereby everything seems to be coming to a “head”, from the economic situation onward. How can we meet this positively?

Conventional astrologists are generally plunged into gloom by the portents of the stars. This is a kind of determinism, a letting go as one is exposed to adverse cosmic influences. But we should seek more positive spiritual attitudes as an antidote, so that we may draw down the heavens to help our weak forces toward victory.

Today, we can learn from some historical personalities in their own struggles. It is not really a matter of fame, for even the small domestic issues may weigh even more with the cosmos; therefore, if we can see our own inclinations so that they become known, we will then be able to get our bearings.

In this year, 1966, Uranus is in its perihelion, which also happened at the time of Novalis, of whom we have spoken earlier. He was a man who created a very substantial amount in a short time, and one through whom inspirations flowed like an unceasing river. But he is still not very well known, although attempts are being made to translate him at the moment, and make his works more public. However, it is encouraging for us in 1966 to look back on this individuality in his last few years. This was a moment in history when something

came to a head, when Uranus was being grasped, in higher knowledge, by a human being. For they are Beings of a high order Who speak from Uranus, and it is therefore helpful to try and understand one who was inspired by this planetary influence. Rudolf Steiner said much about him, and gave indications that he could also be realized in a past incarnation of a very high order.

Now let us look at Uranus in its aphelion, which happened in 1925 (see above). Here we find a living more in the limb and will sphere. (In Novalis, the Uranus forces came more to expression as head forces.) Rudolf Steiner entered the spiritual world at about this time, when the Divine Will forces were speaking to the Earth sphere. We know what Rudolf Steiner gave to humanity—above all out of the will impulse of the last years of his life, when his most important impulse was not only to give out knowledge, but to bring an impulse to humanity to bring to this knowledge a fiery will, so that they might both do and prepare the future steps of evolution. It is in these two aspects of Uranus, in its perihelion and aphelion, of both Novalis and Rudolf Steiner, that we can find some assurance.

Now let us look at the soul's entry into death and the spiritual world, rather than the more common approach of the entry into the physical through birth. Rudolf Steiner also gave us this aspect in order that it might be helped in its passage by the efforts of those still on Earth—and in ancient Tibet it was a well-known science to study the experience of the soul after death.

At incarnation we receive our ingredients of existence from the Earth, so to speak. At exarnation our ether body departs from the physical, which returns to the Earth. The ether body remains intact for a further three days, and during this time it unfolds a tableau of the life events as a totality, which is then gathered up by the cosmos as a great imagination—almost a painting—in the universe. After three days this ether body expands. Just as the physical body, in fatigue, gravitates to Earth, so does the ether body become more elevated in its freedom. After death it wishes to return to the cosmos, and then our soul loses its grip on the body. This ether body integrates with the planets as a superb imagination, whereby a soul's work can come to fruition for the benefit of the universe.

Normally, the planets are so arranged in their configuration at death that a souls- ether body 'slips', as it were, into the 'holes' in the planets with all its events, which are portrayed as majestic memory pictures. The human soul sacrifices its ether forces so that they may again penetrate the cosmos, after being enriched by the Earth life.

All that Novalis achieved in his last years is contained in the previous Uranus in its perihelion and once more resounds through the cosmos. It is also a fact that oppositions are important, and the last years of Rudolf Steiner's life left an equally positive message in the cosmos.

In 1900 Uranus was in the descending node (in the constellation of Scorpio). Uranus had, in fact, descended below the plane of the ecliptic to create a strong contact with the Earth. This was the year when Rudolf Steiner first began to communicate his Anthroposophical message—the year of the birth of the Anthropo-Sophia.

In 1945 Uranus stood in its ascending node, and that was the time when the atomic bombs were released on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (see Fig. 3). It will again be in the descending node in 1984, which reminds us of George Orwell's terrifyingly prophetic novel. It will, in fact, be opposite the node of Hiroshima. We are reminded of Orwell's Super-Dictator, and the technical penetrations into every corner of humanity's private life.

In a recent survey, it was recorded that 60% of the young people of an American university honestly thought that Americans could not individually distinguish between right and wrong, and they needed an overall guidance which would control their lives. They also thought that the police should be permitted the most brutal methods to extort confessions. Here lies the danger of a resigned humanity. You know that it is already possible to hear, through special devices which record, or "bug", the most intimate conversations at a distance, and that these devices are both minute and cheap to buy. Big business companies find them useful to 'spy' upon the credit-worthiness of their clients. But this is the beginning of the end—a creeping preparation for the Super-Dictatorship of Orwell's imagination. (Editor's Note: Compare this concept with current opportunities for tracking individuals through technology.)

Why did he choose 1984, which coincides with this Uranus position? This date is also closely concerned with the return of Halley's Comet (about 1986) which was last here in 1910. This was discovered by Halley about 1780, and he calculated its return. It was a tremendous spectacle, and has an orbit of 76 years.

Such comets come from great distances, pass round the Sun and disappear again (Diagram). This whole parabola has to be calculated. However, most do not return. They are the opposite of the planets, which travel round their orbits with an almost monotonous regularity. However, comets shoot in and disappear, and these are beneficial. They were called “Scourges of God” in the Middle Ages, which swept the astral atmosphere of our solar system to remove the debris and the trash. Their uniqueness lay in their non-return. But some do return. Such are often on the way to becoming planets, or have already become such, but they are worse than planets. It is just as if someone acquires a new quality; it is much more pronounced than an inborn one. They become even more philistine than the planets. Rudolf Steiner warned us that Halley’s Comet was concerned with humanity’s descent into materialism of the deepest order.

When we combine this aspect with the Uranus opposition in 1945 (Hiroshima), we may well be filled with foreboding. However, to comfort you I have inserted the year 1900 as a ray of hope, side by side with the year 1984. The latter is not inevitable in its worst aspects. It can be broken—or at least bent. We know that 1899 marked the end of the Dark Age of Kali Yuga, and Anthroposophy then came in as a healing element. Even with this comet in mind, we must remember that this descent into materiality can be halted. In 1910, just before Halley’s Comet, Rudolf Steiner warned us that materialism must have its limit. We have within us the power, if we have the will, to prevent an irretrievable descent.

There is much more in history that speaks to us of this matter. Uranus in the descending node can also prove that it can display another aspect. Raphael’s Moon falls into the same position at his death, when it stepped into the constellation of Scorpion—at Good Friday in 1520. The Moon was also there in 1483, when Raphael was born. This aspect is associated with his Sistine Madonna. In such cases, the next generation can carry the inspiration further, reflecting such Imaginations in various, and often higher, differentiations. Soloviev, for instance, the great Russian philosopher, reflected this Imagination in Scorpion, when he carried it further as a poem of his three meetings with the Hagia Sophia. We know that the Sistine Madonna is really the Divine Sophia, carrying the Son of Man as the future in Her arms.

Soloviev “relived” this experience, as it were, for the first time in a Russian Cathedral. He “relived” it a second time, as a theological student in the British Museum, when She told him to go to Egypt, where She would reveal Herself to him. This he did, dressed as he was in his very formal black suit, and nearly got himself killed by the Bedouins as a devil. But he stayed overnight, and when the Sun rose in the morning he encountered the full glory of the Hagia Sophia. Soloviev died in 1900, and carried with him the banner of the Sophia.

From these examples, we have two great healing elements that rest in the very central heart of this threat, giving us new courage to realize that the spiritual world is working with us constructively, at the heart of every situation, however terrifying.

The moment of death is also a moment of resurrection, as human souls pour out their life fruits into the cosmos; and if the content is righteous, it is also a moment of rejuvenation for the cosmos. Rudolf Steiner emphasizes that humanity’s future task is to fill the cosmos with a new spiritual content, which we have achieved through following the Christ.

When we see the Moon in Scorpion, as we have mentioned, it is related to the Sistine Madonna, which was contained and engraved in the ether body of Raphael. In this way, a human being can redeem even the Scorpion’s sting of death. This great imagination has been ‘painted’ into the cosmos as a great healing deed of humanity. Such are the positive aspects on which we can dwell to counteract the threats of which we have spoken.

In 1900, when Rudolf Steiner gave out his first messages, he was accompanied by spiritual godfathers from the higher worlds—those who had passed through death, such as Schroer. Rudolf Steiner knew him as a professor, whose chief subject was Goethe, at the Viennese Technical College. Through him, Steiner was guided into the Goethean stream, which he developed further. Soloviev also entered the world of the spirit in 1900, as we said earlier.

We will now glance at Neptune, which also moved into its aphelion in 1966. (We have to remember that the perihelion vacillates somewhat—as does that of Uranus—as though it will not be trapped by calculation). Neptune’s aphelion position, we realize, is a limb aspect in this case of great Cosmic Will streaming through the world, if one would be aware of it. Uranus represents more an occult-esoteric stream that breaks into our human

existence from the extra-solar universe. But Neptune is more the forward moving stream of human evolution, a streaming, flowing element in which the soul is embedded.

How is this Neptune concerned with present century rhythms? It was in its aphelion at the beginning of the 19th century, arriving about 1800. If we return again to Novalis, who died in 1801, we make an encouraging discovery. We find that the great School of Michael in the spiritual worlds took place at that time—at the end of the 18th century and into the 19th. This was where souls were prepared for their future tasks, including those for the present century. Such a School was reflected into Earth reality, according to Rudolf Steiner, through Goethe's *Legend of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*. This portrays how a human community builds the bridge between the material and spiritual worlds at great sacrifice and with stupendous effort. The Green Snake gave her body to be this bridge over the river that divided the two realms. It is essential that we know this Legend, for it holds for us the necessary message for this moment in history. It is a reflection from that Heavenly School, conducted by the Archangel Michael. Simultaneously, Novalis wrote his well-known fragmentary novel, which contains the fairy tale of Klingsor. This is of the same caliber as the Legend, for it also reflects the Michaelic School. All such things were combined in humanity's search for the Divine Sophia. A preoccupation with both these legends could be most encouraging at this moment, especially in their reference to human communities, however small, and the bridge we have to build.