



Scorpio 2017 edition:

Christmas Cheer

The Ancient 7, with Eve Dembowski

From the President

I can't believe it is mid-November already. We are looking forward to the astrological community Christmas party. It is time for the Pageant. Christmas decorations have been up in the stores for months. How different it is to my childhood. My parents were very strict about the festive season. I come from an intensely Catholic background and we were reminded constantly that the month before Christmas was Advent, a time of preparation and not of celebration. Our tree didn't go up till Christmas Eve, no matter how we grizzled or complained. What everyone else did was of no concern.

We had a giant crib in our front yard. My father made it every year from timber and tar paper, and it went up a week before Christmas. The hand-painted figures were purchased from the Carmelite nuns at Glen Osmond. As children, we didn't realise it had been a financial transaction – we thought they were painted specially for us! For a week the crib had only straw, an empty manger and the ox and ass. Dad ran an extension cord up the front gable to a star which was switched on at night. Thinking back, this was one of his rare handyman achievements - making and fixing things was not his forte, despite being a Virgo. On the night of Christmas Eve, we had a little ritual of placing the baby in the manger, with Mary, Joseph and the shepherds around. We were very proud of our crib, and loved it when people stopped to look or bring their children on to the lawn for a close-up view.

On Christmas Day we went to early Mass – we were considered too young for Midnight Mass - and we were not allowed into the living room until we got home. There would have been a modest pile of gifts by today's standards, but that didn't dampen our

excitement – in those austere times in the decade after the war, any present was opened with bated breath. Lunch was awaited with great anticipation – only at Christmas and Easter did we get to eat roast chicken! No chicken farms in those days – chickens were expensive and had to be ordered from the butcher well in advance. A bit different from the \$8 takeaway hot chooks from Coles – just an everyday meal now.

Peace on earth to men of goodwill. Are we people of goodwill? Are our leaders? Is conflict just the human condition or is it because of greed and thirst for power? The modest Christmases of my childhood would be abundance for the poor and the displaced of today's world. How little some have, and how much we have.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas season, full of sharing and generosity of spirit. I'll sign off for the year with an Irish Christmas blessing:

**The light of the Christmas star to you
The warmth of home and hearth to you
The cheer and good will of friends to you
The hope of a childlike heart to you
The joy of a thousand angels to you
And ever love and peace to you**

Cate Whelan



Meeting dates



November 25 - Christmas party, with Astromundi

February 10 - A look at the year ahead, with Alice Portman and Cate Whelan

March 17 - Esoteric Astrology, with Adrienne Barkla

April 7 - Transits to Angles, with Miriam Laister

Feeling Fiery?

We all enjoyed Vivien Lowe's Vesta talk. But if you missed it, or would like more information, Vivien has kindly given us permission to put her slideshow from the presentation [on our website](#).

We have other great articles there too!



Are you overdue?

Want to continue contributing to, and learning from, your astrological community?

We need your membership fees! FAASA runs on a lot of volunteered time, and a good amount of Jupitarian cheer. If you're a member, you receive a some benefits and it means you're helping keep astrology alive in South Australia.

Contact Cate president@faasa.com.au to renew today, or come to our Christmas party and join then.



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The Original Seven: An astrology older than you know

with Eve Dembowski

The way in which the planets were viewed and understood by the ancients differs fundamentally to the way in which modern astrologers approach them. The actual meaning of the planets has retained some of the traditional essence though much has been distorted through mistranslation and interrupted transmission. As the modern planets; Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, have adopted attributes once worn by the visible planets our understanding of the meanings and association of the classical seven has been watered down.

Modern astrology understands and works with the planets almost exclusively from the perspective of their “universal” or common significance. Any Astrology book will provide extensive lists of words associated with and describing each planet. Such as Venus being the planet of love and representing our values, Mercury the planet of communication and representing our rational thinking, Saturn the planet of responsibility and restriction, Jupiter being associated with wealth and expansion et cetera. In traditional astrology the common description of a planet is far briefer.

In modern times whole books have been written about individual planets, exploring every aspect of their meanings and providing thorough analysis of their expression through the

signs, houses, aspect and cycles. From the psychological perspective our understanding of the planets as urges of our psyche has given us a model in which planets are seen as equal, though some may challenge us more. Saturn represents authority, father figures or restriction in everyone's chart. How well we deal with these things will depend on Saturn's aspects, sign and house position in our individual chart.

The standard way of presenting the planets is in order from the Sun outwards, except for the Moon that is commonly placed after the Sun, indicating her equal status as one of the luminaries. Following the Sun and Moon we have the inner or personal planets, Mercury, Venus and Mars followed by the social planets, Jupiter and Saturn finally arriving at the trans-personals, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. This order seems logical and clear yet bears no relation to that used by our astrological forefathers.

Before considering how the ancients understood the planets we must exclude the so called transpersonal: Pluto, Neptune and Uranus. Planets were referred to as "wandering star" and had to be, by this definition visible like all other stars in our sky. Focusing on the traditional seven planets without competition from their younger more glamorous siblings, allows some of the qualities attributed to these younger members our solar system to be reclaimed by the seven senior planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury and Moon.

The planets were presented in this order, referred to as the Chaldean order. This order is very important and forms the backbone to our astrology whether we know it or not. It reveals the genesis of how planets relate to each other through aspects, reception and house position. The planets were ordered according to their speed, from slowest to quickest. The "outer" planets consisted of Saturn, Jupiter and included Mars for they were beyond the orbit of the earth. The Sun was, as should be, in the center followed by the inner planets; Venus, Mercury and the Moon.

One of the most beautiful images using this order is that of the descent of the Soul from the unchanging realm of the Divine, through the seven planetary spheres or gates, beginning with Saturn and finally arriving on earth through the Moon: the Moon being the only planet existing wholly in both this lower world of material generation and the upper world of divine spirit, a beautiful symbol of the Soul. You will notice that Saturn rules Capricorn and the Moon rules Cancer, this is in line with the Solstices. In the earlier times the natural wheel of the Zodiac began with Cancer, the point of earthly birth.

The ancients understood planets through their essential nature: hot, cold, moist and dry. Though they talked of benefic and malefic planets, it was understood that any planet close to its essential nature would behave well and any planet far from its nature could behave in an exaggerated or imbalanced manner causing trouble for the native.

The qualities that best promote life are hot and moist, but too much heat with no moisture is not conducive to fertility. Cold and dry are the most destructive to life of all the qualities, but cold with moisture can still create growth. The so called malefic planets: Saturn and Mars, are both overly dry or hot, Saturn is extremely dry and cold, Mars is burning hot and dry. Both inhibit growth.

The benefic and malefic status of the planets is reflected in the signs they ruled, their relationship to the luminaries, the givers of life and the doctrine of aspects. Traditionally Saturn rules both Capricorn and Aquarius, both these signs oppose Leo and Cancer, the signs of the luminaries. Mars traditionally ruled Scorpio and Aries these signs square Leo and Cancer. While Venus and Jupiter rule signs that are in sextile or trine to the domain of the Luminaries. The only planet to defy this scheme is naturally Mercury, the trickster of the gang who is always out to fool us. He rules the signs on either side of Leo and Cancer so therefore has no direct connection with either.

The planets were seen as players in the drama of the native's life, and these players were versatile; they could play many parts and often shared roles. How well they fulfilled their role was dependent upon their celestial and mundane condition, in other words, how they related to the unchanging realm of the divine, the zodiac, and the ever moving mundane world; the houses which hinge on the horizon and the MC/IC. The planets were understood to have both specific meaning in an individual chart as well as universal or common meaning.

In natal astrology it was the specific significance or meaning that was most important to the judgment of a native's life. Jupiter may signify riches and wealth but this means nothing if Jupiter is not the significator of these things in a particular chart. Jupiter's role as universal significator of wealth could assist by being well aspected to the specific significator of wealth; the planet best placed to act as "the bringer of riches".

The traditional understanding of astrological judgment and chart delineation meant that you couldn't deduce anything by just taking one planet in isolation. As I have said, the planets played varied roles and interacted with each other in a fashion unique in every chart. A weak or debilitated planet could make way for a stronger or more dignified one (through reception, aspect and rulership) to fulfill or assist in its role. The integrity of a planet would be judged by their essential dignity (rulership, exaltation, triplicity, term or bounds and face) or lack thereof. The strength and ability of a planet to deliver its promise depended on its accidental fortitude and weaknesses, assessed through house placement, position relative to the Sun, direction, speed.

Each area of life could be assessed by looking to the planet that had governance or influence over that area. The ruler of the house governs the affairs of that house and any planet in that house will have influence over it. We can also use the same principles when

delineating transits or progression, by asking ourselves; what role does the transiting planet play in the chart and what effect will this bring to the place/planet it is now transiting?

Many contemporary astrologers trained in modern astrology, are surprised by just how much specific information can be gleaned from just seven planets. It needs to be remembered that astrology survived and thrived for many millennia with only these seven planets. Getting to know them more intimately is well worth the time.

Southern Star

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