

Astraea

Astrology for Soul Evolution

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Published May 1, 2009, in E-news from NCGR. For more information about the National Council for Geocosmic Research, a preeminent American astrological organization with a growing international membership, please visit www.geocosmic.org.

In mid-April, I presented a talk and workshop for the Ohio Valley Chapter of NCGR. Earlier, while discussing potential topics, a board member requested that I cover Chiron and the Big Four asteroids (Ceres (now a dwarf planet), Pallas, Juno, and Vesta). I agreed but urged that we also discuss Astraea and Lilith, and I later added in Hygeia as well.

The feedback about Astraea from workshop participants was particularly moving—the material really seemed to touch folks deeply. I realized that much of what I presented on Astraea was original material I had compiled from years of observation and had taught in classes and that I needed to put it into an article to make it more widely available. I also felt that now is an opportune time to introduce Astraea more widely because of her upcoming retrograde cycle—I personally have found her retrogrades quite impactful and, at times, challenging.

Astraea was the fifth asteroid to be discovered. Like the Big Four whose discovery preceded hers, she is a member of the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter; her orbital period is 4.13 years.¹ As of this writing (4/27/09), she is transiting at 5 Aquarius 50. She will turn retrograde on 5/29/09 at 8 Aquarius 37 and will turn direct on 9/14/09 at 23 Capricorn 25.

I first heard of this asteroid years ago when I discovered her glyph in my new Solar Fire program. I recognized her name because a New Age spiritual group I was once in taught that Astraea was a powerful liberator goddess who could be invoked to cut us free from blockages, both inside and out. I looked up Astraea in Martha Lang-Wescott's *Mechanics of the Future: Asteroids*²—Martha primarily felt that Astraea relates to being stuck and not letting go.

¹ "5 Astraea," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5_Astraea, accessed 4/27/09.

² "Astraea," Martha Lang-Wescott, *Mechanics of the Future: Asteroids*, Rev. Ed. (Conway, MA: Treehouse Mountain, 1991), pp. 92-97.



I could see a connection between these two views but intuited that there was yet more to Astraea's archetypal energies.

After years of observation, this is my take on Astraea:

- Nately she can show where we're blocked.
- Out of necessity, through trial and error, we learn how to unblock ourselves, honing problem-solving skills—in particular, those with Astraea prominent become excellent problem-solvers.
- We often then fall into the trap of thinking we're supposed to solve everyone's problems, either taking them on voluntarily or having people dump them on us (the codependency stage).
- Of course this won't work in the long run and leads to burnout. We also finally realize not only that we can't solve the world's problems, but that we have no right to interfere with people's learning processes. Trying to "fix" people and situations violates others' boundaries, is often felt as aggressive, and is inherently unhealthy. In addition, not being omniscient, our views may be incorrect regarding what is best for people.
- If we don't then get stuck in cynicism, we discover that we can become effective facilitators—instead of solving other people's problems, we can help them hone their own problem-solving skills in order to solve their own problems.

I have Astraea in Capricorn on the MC, and my dad, now retired, is an engineer. Yup! Engineers are problem-solvers. Astraea also at times can refer to connections with the law, as she was the Roman goddess of justice. I worked as a legal secretary for 12 years, and I've seen her refer to law and legal matters in some other folks' charts as well. While the constellation of Virgo is most often depicted in sky maps as Ceres/Persephone holding a sheaf of wheat, Virgo has also been depicted as Astraea holding the scales of justice (Libra).

In addition to Astraea's connection with Virgo, I feel that she has a strong connection with Capricorn and perhaps somewhat with Taurus. Certainly the order of the earth signs describes Astraea's evolution from being stuck (Taurus) to becoming irritated by stuckness, perhaps becoming obsessively focused on the issue (Virgo), and then devising ways of attacking the problem (Capricorn). Both Virgo and Cap tend to be perfectionistic and judgmental/intolerant of what one views as dysfunctional, issues which many of us with a prominent



Astraea seem to deal with. Indeed, at times the imperfect world may feel toxic to an Astraean person with not-yet-healed boundaries.

After observing these characteristics, I then came upon the myth of Astraea, the Starry Virgin and Goddess of Justice, as recorded by numerous Greek and Roman authors, including Hesiod, Aratus, and Ovid.³ According to the myth, Astraea was a great goddess who lived side by side with people in the Golden Age, showing them how to live kindly, just lives. As humans became less enlightened in the Silver Age, she began exhorting them to return to their earlier ways. Unfortunately, they did not listen and continued to devolve, becoming coarser and more selfish and thoughtless. Eventually people became so evil that Astraea could no longer stand being among them—she called a large group together, denounced humanity’s evil, and rose up into the heavens as the constellation Virgo, the last immortal to leave earth.

I certainly can’t blame Astraea for leaving—indeed, some might contend that she tarried among humanity much longer than they deserved.

Astrologically, some of us with strong Astraebas do seem to have genuine difficulty staying in embodiment. When the world feels toxic, it can take a great deal of willpower and energy to stick around. But in the end, I feel that those of us dealing with this dimension of Astraea must have faith that however imperfect we may be as individuals, we still can function as conduits of the Starry Virgin’s energy of liberation into the world, supporting people and communities in learning how to solve their own problems and, by striving to anchor Astraea’s flame of justice and right living, helping raise earth’s vibration bit by bit in hopes of a future return to a Golden Age.

³ Anne Wright, “Virgo” and “Libra,” *Constellations of Words*, www.constellationsofwords.com/Constellations/Virgo.html and www.constellationsofworlds.com/Constellations/Libra.html, and “Astraia,” www.theoi.com/Titan/Astraia.html, accessed 4/27/09.