

Declination Longitude - Just a Dimension Away

by Denis Picard

This orientation and interpretation of declination has been hinted at by many astrologers through the history of our tradition: words like parallel, antiscia, declination, declination equivalents and, of course, declination longitude. The common thread is that they all use the equator and latitude as baseline elements of measurement. The use of equator and latitude accents the vertical relationship of ecliptic to equator, i.e., declination. Declination is the measured differential between these two great circles and underlies the extremes of solstices at 0 degrees Cancer and Capricorn.

Here is a website with an excellent illustration that will help you picture the two great circles and how they relate. Scroll down the Contents list to the link for "The celestial equator" (second from the bottom) to jump to that section.

www.astro.com/astrology/cw_astro_houses_e.htm

The measurement of declination describes the graduated difference between 0 Aries/Libra, the pivot of equator and ecliptic, and 0 degrees Cancer/Capricorn. This graduated difference is measured in degrees of declination and goes from 0 at the pivot to 23.5 degrees at the solstices. This graduated path of the Sun is what creates the seasons from the orientation of our home, the equator. It is this shift from ecliptic to equator as our point of reference that describes the spatial environment. We can say that the planets and their zodiacal positions on the Sun's path (ecliptic) are the descriptions of attitudes and our sense of time. We then can suggest that the planets and their positions measured from the equator describe spatial environment, the realm of feeling. This is declination longitude.

Declination longitude is the measurement that takes into account latitude from the equator. Latitude reconciles the observational difference of position as seen from earth. Planets at the pivot have no difference from ecliptic to equator. As planets move their position toward the solstice extremes, the degree of difference from the equator becomes more apparent. For example, currently Saturn is 24 degrees of Scorpio Geo longitude but 17 degrees Scorpio Declination Longitude.

The measurement of declination, i.e., latitude from equator, can be converted to a declination solar equivalent based on the Sun's regular fluctuation above and below the celestial equator. Its position via latitude has a constant rate of ascension and decline to and from solstices. This allows us to correlate the Sun's constant latitude position from the equator to a constant zodiacal degree equivalent. The ability to cross reference the solar equivalent degree to any planet's latitude from the equator in zodiacal degree gives us the ability to speak from the equator in terms of the signs of the zodiac, i.e., declination longitude. This is how the example above was calculated.

Our experience of thinking and feeling and their interplay in our daily lives is so common we tend to take it for granted. It is when the intensity of our experience stands out of the norm that we tend to take notice. The intensity can last for a long period of time (e.g., divorce or illness) or can be precipitated by a singular event, such as an accident or meeting a significant other.

The experience of these circles is simultaneous; thinking and feeling can influence and initiate each other. The ability to separate these modes of perception helps us to articulate the process of event. The upcoming lecture in January will demonstrate the timing windows that are created when you take both the ecliptic and equator into account on their own terms.

Although the use of the equator as reference was used by previous cultures, the calculation of declination longitude is a modern convention. Due to the advent of computers, many of these “extraneous” calculations can be added to our tool box as astrologers.

Celestial mechanics needless to say is not everyone’s forte but necessary to establish the foundations for this particular approach. Eclipses have long been known for the intensity they represent. The relationship of ecliptic to equator during eclipses is primary, along with the lunar node alignment. Occultations are planetary alignments in longitude, as well as LATITUDE, as seen from earth. This is another example of ecliptic and equator connection when planets are aligned and the “dynamic intensity” effect produced in the biosphere.

The ratio of planetary movement as measured in comparison between circles is approximately 4:1 on average. This means that 4 degrees of movement in Geocentric longitude along the ecliptic is equal to 1 degree along the equator, declination longitude. The circumference of these circles are not identical to each other and the planetary movement at the solstices is slower by position. The 4th harmonic in our tradition is a signature of manifestation and a indicator of dynamic process. The import of declination longitude movement along with geocentric longitude measurement reveals the process and depth in time and space toward manifestation. The dialectic between heaven and earth, thinking and feeling, time and space, the non-physical and the sensible have expression in fundamental astrological language. The quality of planetary position via the ecliptic AND the equator broadens the descriptive field of consciousness and enables us to approach one step closer to articulating the dynamic interplay that is our lives.

The next article will introduce the relationship of antiscion, contra-antiscion and the work horses of declination: parallels and contra-parallels.

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