

Australia Says Sorry!

An astrological perspective

On 13th February, 2008 at the opening of the 42nd Parliament the new Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, apologised for the "Stolen Generations". This was a policy of removing aboriginal children from their families and placing them in the care of church organisations or foster families. This policy was in place until the 1970's.

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Australia says Sorry!

Today at 9am Canberra time the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, offered an apology to the Stolen Generations. This was followed by the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Brendan Nelson. A great deal of discussion immediately followed and will continue for a very long time on what it all means. Here is my take.

When I look at an astrology chart my starting place is always the Sabian Symbols¹ on the Ascendant² (Asc) and MidHeaven³ (MC).

Let's start with the chart for the "birth" of Australia. For this I used the swearing in of the original Federal Parliament which occurred at 1.35pm on 1st January 1901 in Sydney. See Fig 1

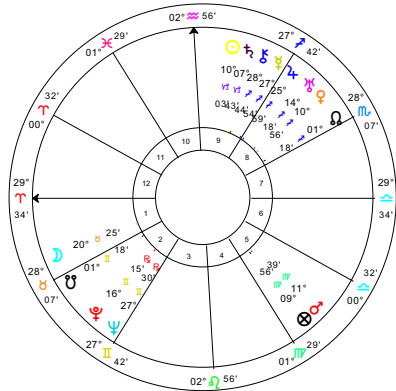


Figure 1 - Australia

Asc: 30th degree of Aries (♈)
Symbol: The duck pond and its brood

MC: 3rd degree of Aquarius (♒)
Symbol: A deserter from the navy.

What does this mean? Australia is the only continent that is a single nation. Here we see the effect of the image of the duck pond. A duck pond has very clear boundaries, unlike an ocean, sea or even a river. Socially, Australia has been seen as a place of support and nurturing. The idea of the "fair go" combined with an attitude of "she'll be right" has meant there is a strong sense of family and community – similar to the mother duck with her ducklings.

So we see here that Australia is very caring and supportive of "its own" even to the extent of strongly excluding "others" – see the Howard government's Pacific Solution for refugees and John Howard's comment "we will decide who comes here".

At the same time Australians are traditionally anti-authority. They are very casual and even antagonistic about rules. This is born out by the MidHeaven symbol. The navy represents the ultimate in "state" authority. The deserter is someone who completely breaks with the imposed rules.

Let's now look at the Progressions⁴ - see Figure 2

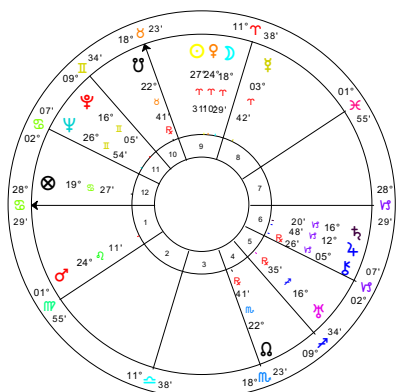


Figure 2 – Progressed chart

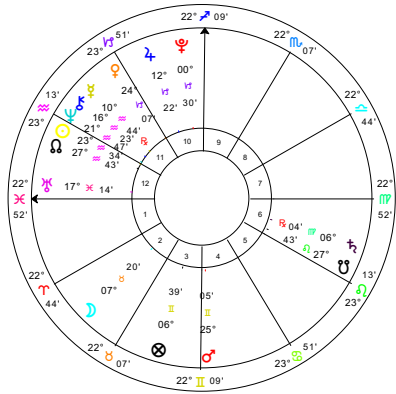
Asc: 29th degree of Cancer (♋)
Symbol: A Greek Muse weighing newborn twins in golden scales.

MC: 19th degree of Taurus (♉)
Symbol: A new continent rising out of the ocean.

The MidHeaven clearly represents a new beginning. Out of the ocean of trials and challenges a brand new landmass has developed. This is about the surge of potentiality that comes out of a crisis.

The Ascendant is also talking about new beginnings ("newborn twins"). In addition there is an element of "weighing" options and possibilities.

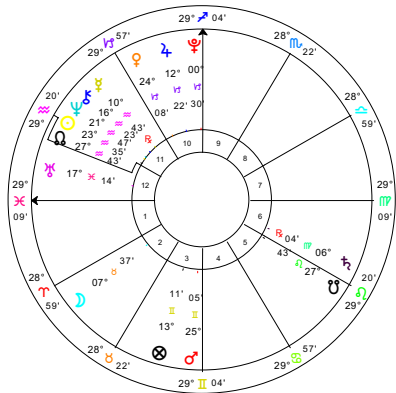
Next we turn to the Transits⁵. In this instance, I have prepared the chart for when Kevin Rudd began his speech as well as that for Brendan Nelson.



Asc: 23rd degree of Pisces (♓)
Symbol: A "materializing medium" giving a séance.

MC: 22nd degree of Sagittarius (♐)
Symbol: A group of immigrants as they fulfill the requirements of entrance into the new country.

Figure 3 – Sorry speech – Kevin Rudd



Asc: 30th degree of Pisces (♓)
Symbol: A majestic rock formation resembling a face is idealised by a boy who takes it as his ideal of greatness, and as he grows up begins to look like it.

MC: 30th degree of Sagittarius (♐)
Symbol: The pope blessing the faithful.

Figure 4 – Response – Brendan Nelson

I think these symbols are quite telling. Those associated with Kevin Rudd are about acknowledging and connecting with those who have passed away and then a sense of inclusiveness suggested in the idea of bringing new immigrants "into the fold". While the indigenous people are not "immigrants" in a physical sense, this idea does apply culturally. On the other hand, the non-indigenous people of Australia certainly are immigrants. The main point I draw from this symbol is that for both cultures and peoples there is a need to integrate with each other.

The symbols Brendan Nelson got stuck with are quite different. In many ways, his speech felt like that is the speech John Howard would have made had he been in that position. The image of the growing into the image of the rock face suggests to me that Dr Nelson is emulating his "hero", John Howard. The MC symbol for Kevin Rudd was about integration, whereas the symbol of the pope suggests someone "telling you how it will be". It comes across as a directive from above. While he did use the word "sorry" and acknowledged the pain and suffering, much of what he said was more like an explanation or justification. He even hinted that there would be no compensation.

Let's now turn to the planetary aspects⁶.

Figure 5 shows the relationship between the natal chart, progressions and transits.

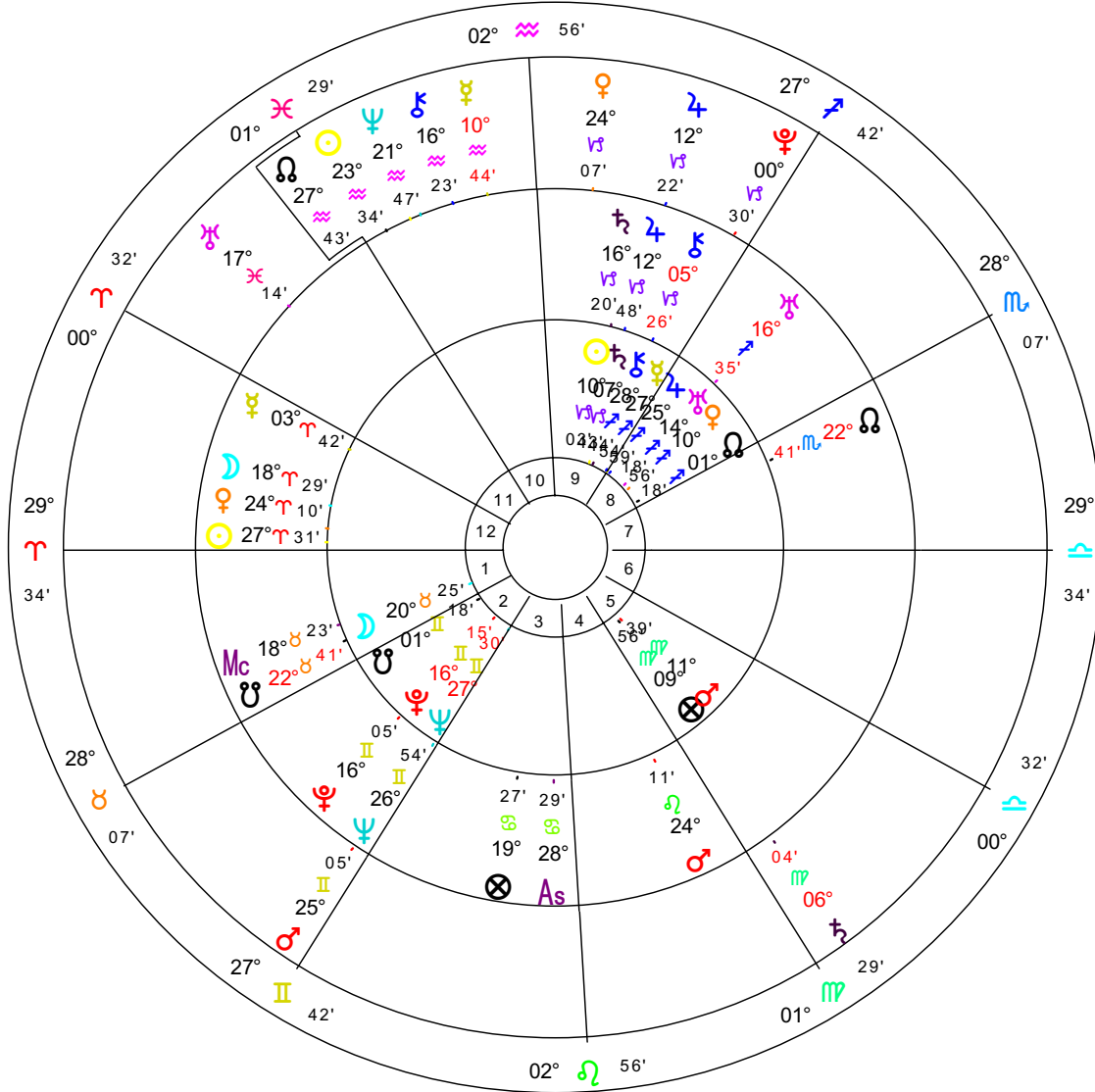


Figure 5

- Inner wheel – Australia
- Middle wheel – progressions
- Outer wheel – transits at the time of the Prime Minister's speech

In Table 1 we see that the natal Pluto (♇), Mercury (☿) and Neptune (♆) have a number of aspects – both progressed and transiting. Natal Chiron (♁) is aspected by the progressed Ascendant and natal Jupiter (♃) is aspected by transiting Mars while progressed Jupiter (♃), Node (♁) and Venus (♀) have aspects to transits.

Pluto (♇) is the planet representing regeneration and renewal. It is aspected by the progressed Pluto (♇), Uranus and Saturn. Natal Pluto (♇) being aspected by the progressed Pluto (♇) will give a great deal of emphasis and focus to the characteristics of this planet. Hence this is clearly a time of renewal. Another aspect of Pluto (♇) is its association with death. This period in our history could easily have been one of violence. By changing the government and utilising the positive elements of Pluto (♇) we are able to bring out the reconciliation aspects rather than the destructive ones.

Uranus (♅) represents revolution and change. Again this reinforces the need for change at this stage in Australia's development. Combining the Uranian drive for change with the Plutonian

explosiveness and destructive side could have been a real recipe for disaster. As the progressions are fairly slow moving it is not a time for complacency. However, the indications at this time are looking positive. Provided today's gesture is the beginning and not the totality of the process of reconciliation we have exciting times to look forward to.

This drive for change is modified by the progressed Saturn (♄) aspecting the natal Pluto (♇). Saturn (♄) gives limitation and restriction. It is the teacher and disciplinarian. In order for this process to work there needs to be a crystallisation of the espoused values into concrete actions. If we don't see real action following on from today's statements then the prospect of violence is still very real.

Finally, in this configuration is the transiting Chiron (♄). Mythologically, Chiron (♄) was the wounded healer. The person who, through having being damaged themselves are able to bring healing to others. An example is a woman who having suffered breast cancer sets up a support group for other women with the disease. Clearly, many people on both sides of the Stolen Generations have been damaged, some more than others. The energy now is very strong to bring about a healing – let's not lose the opportunity.

Degree	Natal	Progressed	Transiting	Planets/Points		
				Symbol	Name	Meaning
1			♇			
2	♋			☉	Sun	Masculine energy, Yin
3	♌			☾	Moon	Feminine energy, Yang
4		☿		☿	Mercury	Communication
5				♀	Venus	Balance & harmony
6		♂		♂	Mars	Physical energy
7			♃	♃	Jupiter	Growth & expansion
8	♄		♄	♄	Saturn	Restriction, limitation, crystallisation
9				♅	Uranus	Revolution & change
10				♆	Neptune	Spiritual awareness, symbols
11	☉ ♀		☿	♇	Pluto	Death & regeneration
12	♂			♄	Chiron	Healing
13		♃	♃	♋	Node	Karma
14				♌	Ascendant	Appearance
15	♅			♌	MidHeaven	Purpose
16						
17	♇	♇ ♅ ♄	♄			
18			♅			
19		☾ ♌				
20						
21	☾					
22			♆			
23		♋	♌ ♌			
24			☉			
25		♀ ♂	♀			
26	♃		♂			
27		♆				
28	☿ ♆	☉	♋			
29	♄	♌				
30	♌					

Table 1 – Planetary & points relationships

Mercury (☿) is the planet of communication and Neptune (♆) represents spiritual awareness and the ability to work with symbols. Both these planets are aspected by the progressed Sun (☉) and transiting Moon's Nodes (♋).

The Sun (☉) is the giver of life and the vitaliser of the world. It also represents the soul and is a very powerful influence as it gives the purpose and direction to the chart. As we see here, this

energy is being focussed into the areas of communication and spirituality. On the negative side, Mercury (☿) can degenerate into verbal diarrhoea and empty chatter, with Neptune (♆) bringing illusion and deception. We need to be vigilant to ensure this doesn't happen.

The transiting Moon's Node (♁) shows that this is a time where karma is playing a significant role. I guess that would be fairly self-evident.

The other aspects are:

- Natal Saturn (♄) and the transiting Moon (♁). Since the Moon (♁) moves very quickly this is a very transitory impact. The Moon represents the feminine side: emotion, intuition, the mother. These elements were clearly present in both speeches.
- The transiting Mercury (☿) triggers the natal Sun (☉) and Venus (♀). This gives the opportunity to talk (communication) about what is important - the Sun (☉) – with an emphasis on balance and harmony - Venus (♀).
- Transiting Jupiter (♃) is in exactly the same position as the progressed Jupiter (♃). Now is a time for growth and expansion in Australia in all areas. The challenge for us is going to be controlling this growth. Cancer is the classic example of unrestrained growth.
- The progressed Node (♁) being aspected by the transiting Ascendant and MidHeaven shows the very powerful karmic nature of Kevin Rudd's speech. The Ascendant and MidHeaven move very quickly (1 degree every 4 minutes) and so we see that the Prime Minister's speech really tuned in on this. By the time Dr Nelson spoke the moment had passed.
- Progressed Venus (♀) and Mars (♂) aspected by transiting Venus (♀). Again we see the focus on balance and harmony.
- Transiting Mars (♂) aspecting natal Jupiter (♃) reinforces the comments about growth. Mars (♂) provides a great deal of physical energy and combined with Jupiter (♃) gives a time of drive with the energy to get things done.
- Finally, the progressed Ascendant aspecting natal Chiron (♄). As mentioned earlier Chiron (♄) is the healer. Being aspected by the Ascendant means that this energy has an open channel to the world. This is clearly a time for healing!!

In summary, the indications are that the time is right to bring about a great healing in this nation. Today has served as one of the times when Australia has been able to show the world how to "get it right". There is a long way to go and provided we don't get caught up in politicking and self-serving we can look forward to growth, integration and harmony in this great land.

¹ Sabian Symbols

Images associated with each degree of the zodiac. Developed in 1925 by Marc Edmund Jones and Elsie Wheeler. Reworked and reinterpreted by Dane Rhudyar – see “An Astrological Mandala: The Cycle of Transformations and its 360 Symbolic Phases” in 1973 – Vintage Books

² Ascendant

Point coming up on the eastern horizon. Represents the way in which the energy of the chart will be perceived by others

³ MidHeaven also called the Medium Coeli

Highest point on the ecliptic – the path followed by the planets. Represents the ultimate purpose and direction of the energies of the chart.

⁴ Progressions

Advancing the motion of the planets to show the stage of development of the individual or organisation.

⁵ Transits

The current position of the planets and how this impacts on Natal or Progressed charts.

⁶ Aspects

Angle or relationship between planets or points in a chart