

The Astropoetic School of Soul-Discovery

News From The Astropoetic School September 2021

Greetings from [The Astropoetic School of Soul Discovery](#) in the Missouri Ozarks, where the dog days of summer bring a longing for cool release from unrelenting heat and pressure.

Astropoetics and the Mythic Life



In the May issue of this newsletter, I mentioned that [Sharon Blackie](#), author of [If Women Rose Rooted](#), was planning to interview me for her [Mythic Imagination Network](#), and explore the nature of astropoetics and its interface with a life oriented around the mythopoetic cues that let one know sacred magic is afoot. I'm happy to report that we had our interview in June, and that the recording of our conversation is now available for anyone who wants to listen. If you do, just go [here](#).

An Invitation to Learn Astrology From the Inside Out

For the past thirty years, my focus as an astrologer has been teaching others the language of astrology – not so they could hang out their shingle and start doing readings for others, but so that they could find their way to genuine self-knowledge. While knowledge of the world is necessary to be able to navigate it successfully, knowledge of the self is what makes the difference between a life that actually fits and one that is adopted by default. We are all conditioned to believe that certain things are true about the world, and about our relationship to it, but the

process of individuation demands that we question these beliefs, and reach for a deeper sense of authenticity. In this quest, astrology can be an immensely valuable set of tools.

This is so, because a birthchart is a symbolic roadmap to authenticity, showing who you are in your deepest essence, as well as what gets in the way of you freely being you. Understanding the language of astrology allows you to enter into a process of self-discovery that is a far deeper experience than merely having someone “read,” interpret or decode your chart for you. Ultimately, at this level, the chart is not actually something to be interpreted at all, but an ongoing invitation to explore the interior landscape of your psyche and its interface with the world “out there.”

This is an exploration that begins with an introduction to basic vocabulary, but as I teach it, in a way that extends immediately into a consideration of what is your uniquely personal relationship to each piece of the astrological puzzle. Even at the most basic level, out the starting gate, the question is not, “What does this mean?” but “What does this mean to me?” “How have I actually experienced this in my life?” “How does this particular feature of my birthchart translate into my language, my unique constellation of metaphors and touchstone memories?” When you learn astrology in this way, your birthchart gradually becomes a reliable mirror in which the truth of who you are, at any given time, and in any given situation, gets clearly reflected back to you.

This is very different than the way in which astrology is most often taught. There are certain basic principles that are worth acquainting yourself with, but beyond that, working with the symbolism is more like painting than building with blocks. Although each birthchart encompasses the same houses, signs and planets – which have a certain universal, or archetypal quality about them – the various ways in which these basic factors combine and interact with each other are virtually unlimited. In addition, each planetary placement by sign or house, each aspect between planets, and every planetary configuration has a multiplicity of possible expressions. Each person brings their own level of consciousness to the symbolism, which may vary from one part of the chart to the next. Often there are contradictory indications as well as common themes that counterbalance or reinforce themselves in ways that sometimes generate ambivalence or internal conflict, and complicate the picture. At certain times, various aspects of a birthchart may come into the foreground of awareness, while others recede into the background; at other times, a different pattern of emphasis and de-emphasis may prevail. All of this makes an individual birthchart a dynamic reflection of the living person behind the chart, as unique as a set of fingerprints or the sound of a voice.

All of this also makes a genuine understanding of one’s birthchart a multi-dimensional mystery that unfolds slowly over time, rather than something to be gobbled up in one neat and tidying reading. Because the birthchart is an intimately personal and ever-evolving reflection of identity and a life in perpetual flux, learning astrology is not just, or even primarily, a simple matter of mastering basic vocabulary, memorizing keywords, or attaching stock definitions to symbols. Those who attempt to study astrology in this superficial way quickly reach the great so-what, where the supposed meaning of a particular placement or planetary dynamic fails to yield genuine insight, or lead to anything more than flat, platitudinous, one-size-fits-all understanding of tired astrological cliches.

In *Ego and Archetype*, Jungian analyst Edward Edinger, suggests that the key to approaching any symbolic language – including astrology – at this deeper, more personal level lies in understanding the difference between a sign and a symbol (109):

A sign is a token of meaning that stands for a known entity. By this definition, language is a system of signs, not symbols. A symbol, on the other hand is an image or representation which points to something essentially unknown, a mystery. A sign communicates abstract, objective meaning whereas a symbol conveys living, subjective meaning. A symbol has an objective dynamism which exerts a powerful attraction and fascination on the individual. It is a living, organic entity which acts as a releaser and transformer of psychic energy. We can thus say a sign is dead, but a symbol is alive.

Astrology is most often taught as though the birthchart were an elaborate signature of signs – something to be translated, perhaps in the same way that you would translate any foreign language, into English. This is a fairly rational process, although even at this level, you will run into contradictions and paradoxes that make no sense to the rational mind.

The astrology practiced today began its evolution during the Hellenistic Era (circa 300 BCE to maybe 300 CE), when Aristotelian logic was the gold standard for state-of-the-art knowledge. As astrology evolved within this larger intellectual climate, it became a logical system, fairly rule-bound, and most amenable to understanding by the rational mind. Before that, however, astrology was a more divinatory system in which intuitive and imaginal receptivity to what was written in the sky led to a very different, more immediate way of knowing. The birthchart itself was a product of the Hellenistic Era; previously divinatory astrologers were more attuned to the sky itself, the heliacal rising and setting of various planets and stars, the phases of the Moon, eclipses and other visible celestial phenomena.

Now we no longer consult the sky; we rely on computers and abstract symbols on a piece of paper that have no immediately tangible correlates in anything we can experience with our senses or entertain in imaginal wonder. So, we have to find ways to make those connections for ourselves – to engage not just our intellects, but also our senses, our imagination, the emotional dimensions of our personal history, our natural curiosity about what lies beyond the obvious, our intuitive and instinctual impulses, the images and metaphors that show up at astrological auspicious moments, the characters in our lives and on the “big screen” of life around us that seem to embody certain astro-logical qualities, the hints that come from our dreams, the synchronicities that fill the airwaves with messages ready to be plucked and savored – all of this can be grist for the mill of our astrological awakening, if we are willing to pay a more focused kind of attention as we learn the language.

As Jung described this process in *The Red Book* (392):

The symbol . . . rises out of the depths of the self as a word of power and great need and places itself unexpectedly on the tongue. It is an astonishing and perhaps seemingly irrational word, but one recognizes it as a symbol since it is alien to the conscious mind. If one accepts the symbol, it is as if a door opens leading into a new room whose existence one previously did not know.

From this perspective, the birthchart is really only a door. A basic understanding of the astrological language is a key to that door, but astrological knowledge really only comes on line when you learn how to turn the key and enter a new room whose existence you did not previously know. In my work with students, I never know what exactly is going to show up until we enter that door together, and discover anew, fresh insight into symbols that are nearly as old as time.

Perhaps you would like to join us in this grand adventure. I currently have openings for three new students, who are curious enough and brave enough to learn astrology from the inside out, holding their preconceived ideas about astrology lightly, as they discover what it can be. To find out more, and sign up for the Basic Course, go [here](#).

Going Deeper



Another kind of door for those less interested in learning a new language, exists at the Astropoetic School in the form of the Chakra Pattern Exploration.

My basic offering is a consultation called the Chakra Pattern Overview, in which I outline the ways in which the patterns in your birthchart align with one or more of the seven major chakras in classic yogic philosophy.

My interest in the chakras stems back to the very beginning of my career as an astrologer, when I was also living in an ashram in southern California, studying kundalini yoga, and working toward my Master's degree in Marriage, Family and Child Counseling. From the beginning, I naturally started weaving together western psychology with astrology and yogic philosophy, although it was nearly 30 years later before I wrote *[Tracking the Soul with an Astrology of Consciousness](#)*, in which I introduced an integration of astrology and the chakra system.

What the chakras add to the basic birthchart is a sense of the level of consciousness that is brought to a particular pattern within the chart. This is useful because any

astrological symbol can be understood along a continuum of possibilities, from the basest possible, unconscious knee-jerk reaction to the most sublime and enlightened expression of human nature at its best. What makes the difference between one end of the spectrum and the other is the consciousness brought to the chart by the person whose chart it is.

This, of course, is not set in stone, and as we grow and evolve as souls in relation to the patterns in our chart, we gradually gain the facility to move up and down the scale of chakras at will, as a matter of intention, in order to consciously meet the demands of the moment. The natal chart nonetheless shows what I call the default pattern, which is how we approach any given pattern during times of stress, or when we just go unconscious in relation to it. It is our starting point, hopefully, for a lifetime process of working toward mastery in relation to whatever the pattern is designed to teach us.

Most people have anywhere from 5 to 15 patterns in their chart, not all of which will be active at any given time. When a transit or progression triggers one or more of the planets in a given pattern, that pattern will start to move to foreground of life, and in some way, demand your attention; when a number of transits or progressions activate the same pattern, the demand will likely intensify. This is also your opportunity to work on becoming more conscious in relation to the pattern, and shifting whatever problems, issues, or psychological wounds might be associated with the pattern, toward healing, wholeness and a higher level of integration or self-actualization.

During a Chakra Pattern Exploration, instead of doing an overview, we go more deeply into the nature of one particular pattern – usually the pattern that is most highly activated at the time. We explore the history of the pattern, as it unfolds in cyclical time, as well as how it is currently manifesting in your life. We identify patterns and themes, as well as any core issues or wounds associated with the pattern, and explore strategies to take the expression of the pattern to a higher, more creative, more conscious and more empowered level of possibility.

We do all this over the course of six sessions, with additional sessions available if necessary. This is not psychotherapy, but rather a guided process of becoming more deeply aware of what makes you tick, and helping to put you in more deliberate charge of your own process.

If you are interested in pursuing a Chakra Pattern Exploration, a Chakra Pattern Overview is a prerequisite. If you have already had a Chakra Pattern Overview, you can sign up directly for a Chakra Pattern Exploration. You can find both [here](#), the first and second options down respectively.

Torn Asunder

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In previous newsletters – May and September of 2020, and January 2021 – I explored the 300-pound gorilla in our living space at the time, the triple conjunction of Pluto, Saturn and Jupiter – which has so far brought us the Covid-19 pandemic, a summer of intense racial unrest and the insurrection at the Capital on January 6.

Now, in 2021, as we all adjust or fail to adjust to the new normal, we are faced with a new astrological dynamic that also bears further scrutiny. This is the waning Saturn-Uranus square, part of a larger cycle that spans about 45 years. This particular cycle began January – November 1988, and reached additional critical stations (the waxing square) from July 1999 – May 2000; and (the opposition) from November 2008 – July 2010. This current transit will extend from February – December 2021. The next Saturn-Uranus cycle will begin in June 2032.

As with many things astrological, there are many possible ways in which these planetary archetypes can manifest, both individually and in combination, and to outline all these possibilities would be far beyond the scope of this tiny article. In general, however, we can readily observe that Saturn and Uranus are in many ways opposite in nature. Saturn is conservative, at times repressive and oppressive, often marked by limitation, caution, close-minded, rigid thinking, fear, a strong need for safety and security, a sense of social isolation and/or nose-to-the-grindstone, business-as-usual, stay-the-course routine. Uranus is progressive, liberating and wildly free, often marked by a sense of adventure and experimentation, a willingness to take risks, open-minded, imaginative thinking outside the box, a need for freedom from limitations and restrictions of any kind, a sense of social gregariousness, and/or a the-sky-is-the-limit, don't-tread-on-me, no-holds-barred rebellion against rules, routine and structure.

When you put these two planets together, particularly in hard aspect (a dynamic angular relationship of 0, 90 or 180°), you have a powerful, volatile, potentially explosive combination. Again, while there are many possible dimensions along which the current transit will no doubt play out, it seems to me that one very obvious arena is around the development of a vaccine for Covid-19, and our sense of polarization around that development. By the end of 2020, many countries around the world, including the US had granted Emergency Use Authorization for both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, based on mRNA technology, a few months later, adding the Johnson & Johnson viral vector vaccine to its list of recommended options. By the beginning of this current Saturn-Uranus cycle, the US had vaccinated about 26.5 million people, more than had tested positive for the virus since its onset about a year prior (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-02-01/u-s-hits-milestone-in-pandemic-with-more-vaccinated-than-cases>), with over a million people being vaccinated per day.

By mid-February, as the Saturn-Uranus square started to kick in, a phenomenon euphemistically called vaccine hesitancy began being reported in the media, which is, as I see it, a clear expression of the natural antagonism between Saturn and Uranus, as well as the tip of a much larger iceberg. Vaccine hesitancy describes the reluctance of a certain percentage of the population to get the vaccine – for various reasons. Polls (<https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/352976/vaccine-hesitancy-public-opinion.aspx>) have shown a political divide between Republicans and Democrats, suggesting that caution and/or outright mistrust in the face of an unproven, relatively-untested technology was more likely to show up on the right, traditionally more conservative side of the political spectrum, while those on the left, traditionally more progressive side, generally were more willing to take the risk, erring on the side of public health and what many felt was a social responsibility.

With this quick and easy assessment, we can see the general divide between conservative (Saturn) and progressive (Uranus), but the real issue is more complex

and more paradoxical than that. First, many of those who have chosen not to get vaccinated are taking information (some would say disinformation) from alternative sources that fuel their fear about the vaccine, and confirm their bias against it, while most mainstream science supports vaccination as a safe, effective, and necessary health precaution. This resistance on the right is not typical of conservative Saturn, whose traditional preferences would be in line with mainstream scientific consensus. Many of those who have refused the vaccine are, in general, mistrustful of government, authority, and any mandate that would compromise their freedom in any way. This is also not typical of Saturn, whose usual modus operandi is to play by the rules, do what it is told, and not ask questions.

On the other side of the issue, I personally have encountered a number of people, most of whom would consider themselves politically progressive, who have taken a rather fearful, sometimes angry and self-righteous stance against those who, for whatever reason, are refusing vaccines, particularly during the rise of the Delta variant, for which they often blame the unvaccinated. These people are, by and large, unusually trusting of what government health authorities say, and convinced that the vaccine, masks, social distancing, and other conservative precautions are not just necessary, but critical to our survival as a viable society. They typically have no problem with vaccine mandates, or with the restriction of rights and privileges for those who are not playing by what they perceive as being the appropriate rules. This is not typical of Uranus, for which all rules, restrictions and limitations on freedom is anathema, while the necessity for questioning authority is a given.

So, if the polls are correct in noting this political divide between the left and the right, the astrological roles have been reversed. How curious.

The Enantiodromia

As I attempt to make sense of this, I also happen to be reading a book by Carl Jung entitled, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*. In this book, referring back to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, Jung speaks about the *enantiodromia*, which means "being torn asunder into pairs of opposites." Often the *enantiodromia* is about facing the shadow, and coming to terms with it, acknowledging its existence within oneself, integrating it, and ultimately finding a place of dynamic balance between the opposites that no longer has to result in polarization and conflict. This is a process that generally happens in the second half of life, during which (*Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, p 75):

There comes the urgent need to appreciate the value of the opposite of our former ideals, to perceive the error in our former convictions, to recognize the untruth in our former truth, and to feel how much antagonism and even hatred lay in what, until now, had passed for love. Not a few of those who are drawn into the conflict of opposites jettison everything that had previously seemed to them good and worth striving for; they try to live in complete opposition to their former ego.

It is, in my opinion, hard to look out into the world today and not see that we, here in the US, and elsewhere in the world, are becoming increasingly polarized, and "torn asunder into pairs of opposites." There is not a lot of tolerance for those who see the world differently; nor is there much attempt to find middle ground. I also believe

we are, each in his or her own way, re-evaluating some of our basic assumptions about life, our values, and our way of being in the world. How could we not be in a world that is so radically changed in less than two years?

We are, it would seem to me, to be undergoing a kind of cultural enantiodromia, the first part of which involves intense shadow projection, and being torn asunder into pairs of opposites; left-right, vaccinated-unvaccinated, black-white, male-female, rich-poor, young-old, and many others.

It would also appear that we are in a process, albeit a largely unconscious process, of gradually taking in the attributes and qualities of the polarity previously shunned. Hopefully, if Jung is right, we will eventually come to that blessed place of integration (78):

. . . once the conscious mind admits at least the relative validity of all human opinion, then the opposition loses something of its irreconcilable character. In the meantime, the conflict casts round for appropriate expression . . .

Astrologically, it is worth noting that we are in the waning square of the Saturn-Uranus cycle, which is, as seminal astrologer Dane Rudhyar noted, a crisis of reorientation. What we are doing now, in many ways, just isn't working, and hasn't been working for some time. We are not just talking about the pandemic here, but how the pandemic and our response to it has exposed just how badly we are broken – torn asunder by the opposites. We are in often intense disagreement about what needs to change, and we are often ambivalent within ourselves about how we need to change in order best to respond to the changing times. We are at a point in the cycle, where something has to give. This is the crisis of the *enantiodromia*; we are in the middle of it now.

So, how did we get here? Let's look back at the rest of the cycle, and see if we can't track at least part of the story.

The Conjunction

This particular cycle began in January – November 1988. Probably the most significant event of this year was the collapse of the Soviet Union as a world power. Before that, under the visionary leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviets had begun a radical political movement for reformation called *perestroika*, in which the top-down command economy began adopting some of the principles of more liberal Western-style policies in order to better meet the needs of Soviet citizens. This was, in terms of our discussion of Saturn and Uranus, a relatively progressive swing toward the Uranian end of the spectrum in what had previously been a hard, Saturnian totalitarian state.

The result of this experiment was Uranian chaos and a swing back toward the Saturnian pole through increased hardship and scarcity of goods and services in the short term, along with political, social and economic tensions, and the ascent of more hard-core nationalism among the satellite states of the Soviet Empire, who began rebelling against Mother Russia. Estonia was the first Soviet state to declare independence, followed closely by Latvia and Lithuania – all successfully seceding from the union in 1988, and beginning a domino-effect collapse that would take another 2-3 years to complete, with the historical high point being the fall of the

Berlin wall in 1989.

When the Soviet Union began unravelling, it also changed the political landscape in the US, and in particular began a reformation of the Republican party, whose primary bogeyman up to that time had been Communism. Interestingly enough, Al Qaeda was also formed by Osama bin Laden in 1988, although it would take a few more years, before Communism was replaced by Terrorism as the national shadow projection of choice. In the meantime, for a few years, beginning with the 1988 election of George Bush, Senior, the US, and particularly the Republican party began fishing around for a new identity.

Although there is much more to the story than this, this was the first US election in which what is now called the "culture war" took center stage. The term wouldn't get widespread usage until Pat Buchanan's speech at the Republican convention in 1992. But in 1988, the rise of the religious right and its alliance with the Republican party led to a focus on "value-related" issues – namely drugs, crime and its presumption of racial implications, gay rights, abortion, multiculturalism, and other "sins" against the Saturnian ideal of conservative (white, "traditional") family values, circa the good old days, one full Saturn cycle ago in the 1950s.

The culture war has proven to effectively shift public focus from corporate and government shenanigans and malfeasance, and have been a favorite tactic of the Republican party ever since, very effectively dividing the nation into opposite camps, tearing us asunder.

The other development at the beginning of this last cycle between Saturn and Uranus that has forever changed the political landscape was the emergence of the Internet, a Uranian technological innovation that has made the current proliferation of misinformation and disinformation a serious issue at the waning square. The first commercial service providers opened shop in the US and Australia in 1989, shortly after the Saturnian infrastructure was finally in place by the time the cycle began.

The Waxing Square

The waxing square took place during the second Clinton administration, and continued several themes that had emerged at the beginning of the cycle. By 1999, the Internet had revolutionized the economy, which was booming, in part due to wild Uranian speculation about the future value of many dot.com companies that showed promise, but no profit. The stock market peaked in March 2000, and then began crashing to a low in October 2002, sustaining a loss of 78% from its glory days at the end of the millennium. This was a severe Saturnian reality check for those who had profited in the boom times. Several large investors were convicted of fraud by the SEC; Citigroup and Merrill Lynch were issued heavy fines for misleading investors; and Microsoft was sued by the US government for violation of anti-trust laws. Despite the freefall and Saturnian reality check, about half of existing dot.com companies survived, albeit at much more realistic valuations, and in the shakeout of the crash, the foundation of the new Internet economy was stabilized.

Despite Clinton's success in turning the economy around, and his general popularity with voters, he was impeached during the waxing square, although without being convicted by the Senate. Although most people were embarrassed by, if not appalled at his sexual indiscretion, a majority also felt that he was unfairly targeted for removal from office. His popularity rating actually shot up during the

impeachment proceedings, and the Democrats picked up seats during the mid-term election, the first time the party of the president had done that since 1934.

In 1994, before the waxing square, House leader Newt Gingrich had begun moving the Republican party farther to the right with his Contract with America (called the Contract *on* America by its opponents), emphasizing an overhaul of the welfare system, a balanced budget (ushering in the era of institutionalized austerity), anti-crime policies, the prevention of US troops from serving in UN peacekeeping missions, and other measures designed to limit or contain the power of the federal government, while also fanning the flames of the culture war. All of this can be understood as quite Saturnian, in keeping with the traditional alignment of the Republican party with this planet.

On the other side of the coin, traditionally conservative Republicans, long considered the party of pro-business politics, increasingly became champions of neoliberalism – which is basically a resurgence of 19th century ideas about reviving free-market capitalism through liberal (read Uranian) economic policies of deregulation, globalization, free trade and other measures favoring the unimpeded, expanded range of corporate interests.

This is not to say that Democrats did not also embrace neoliberal policies. In fact, it can be argued that the election of Bill Clinton took the neoliberal agenda to a new peak – all of which speaks to the enantiodromia of the Saturn-Uranus cycle, and in particular of the mixing of opposites within the political mainstream.

In part to steal some thunder from his opponents, and in part, as an expression of his own neoliberal sensibilities, Clinton took on welfare reform, deregulated the telecommunications and financial industries, and passed the North American Free Trade Agreement over the objections of trade unions and environmentalists.

Clinton also passed the tough-in-crime Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (the Senate version of which was drafted by then Senator Joe Biden). This law put 100,000 new police officers on the streets; created 60 new death penalty violations under 41 federal capital statutes (some of which were later declared unconstitutional because they presented an "undue risk of executing innocent people;" effectively eliminated the ability of lower-income inmates to receive higher education while in prison; and created incentives for building and expanding correctional facilities, which essentially led to the rise of the private prison industry and a large increase in the US prison population.

While there were provisions in the bill that catered to a more progressive stance – banning assault rifles (a provision later allowed to lapse), allocating funds for prevention and prosecution of domestic violence, and creating new privacy laws around Department of Motor Vehicle databases – the law, and much of Clinton's savvy political agenda was a radical swing to the Saturnian right, and the beginning of the enantiodromia in which the stage was set for what is happening now in calls for the demilitarization and defunding of the police, because of their institutionally sanctioned violence against poor blacks.

Perhaps the defining moment of this waxing square took place at the Battle of Seattle in late 1999, when the traditional Uranian left – including organized labor, environmental groups, social justice activists, consumer rights activists, socialists and anarchists converged to take on globalization and the neoliberal corporate

agenda. As might be expected, the Uranian protests were met by rubber bullets, tear gas and the entire apparatus of a Saturnian well-organized police state.

This was a tearing asunder by opposites, but also the beginning of their blurry and messy integration as the forces of oppression more clearly began to align with free-market capitalism, and progressives were paradoxically fighting to uphold the Old-World Order rapidly passing away.

Opposition

The opposition began with the “greatest financial crisis” since the Great Depression, in which the subprime housing market collapsed, after the policies initiated during the waxing square, including a repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act – separating commercial from investment banking – by neoliberal Bill Clinton, as part of his overall deregulation of the banking industry. The stock market subsequently crashed; longstanding financial institutions like Lehman Brothers and AIG went out of business, along with at least 100 other mortgage companies; and financial markets around the world went into freefall. Meanwhile, 9 million jobs were lost, along with 3 million homes, retirement funds evaporated, and the American Dream disappeared for many (<https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/062515/how-was-american-dream-impacted-housing-market-collapse-2008.asp>).

Although Barack Obama was credited – and castigated – for bailing out the banks in the wake of this collapse and at the beginning of his first term in office, the process was actually initiated under his predecessor George W Bush, who signed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act into law, creating a \$700 billion fund to purchase failing bank assets. This law was in fact a bipartisan effort to stabilize (a Saturnian verb) a neoliberal (Uranian) experiment gone awry – one that destabilized (a Uranian verb) the (Saturnian) security of many at the bottom of the socio-economic pecking order. Those who have profited from this debacle, continue to grow richer; those that suffered, continue to grow poorer; and the disparity between rich and poor continues to widen.

Meanwhile, largely as a reaction to the Uranian chaos set in motion by the neoliberal agenda, and the Great Recession in which many people became disenfranchised and disillusioned, the ultra-conservative Tea Party Movement arose in early 2009, and became a new factor pushing the Republican party farther to the Saturnian right, particularly in terms of their quest for austerity budgets and smaller government, one that incidentally would have inadequate funding to provide basic social services, enforce environmental laws, or hold corporations accountable for their actions; as well as their embrace of the socially conservative culture war that began taking center stage during the conjunction.

At the same time, on the other side of the spectrum, the opposition also saw the rise of the Occupy movement, with its call for a more egalitarian, inclusive democracy that addresses the dark side of neoliberal capitalism and its socially and economically unjust impact on the vast majority (the 99%). The Occupy movement has since, along with the rise of the Democratic Socialist movement, opened up a national dialogue about income disparities, student debt, the pitiful and stagnant minimum wage, and other bread and butter issues affecting many ordinary citizens. It has also helped to move the Democratic party a bit farther to the Uranian left, evidenced by the election of congressional leaders like Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez and the Progressive Caucus, the rise of Bernie Sanders as a formidable candidate in the last

two presidential campaigns, and the omnibus stimulus packages introduced by Joe Biden, which contain many provisions addressing the concerns of the progressive left, as well as the usual handouts to the neoliberal corporate mainstream.

What is interesting to note here is that the tactics of the Tea Party movement, and their successor alt-right insurrectionists have become increasingly Uranian – volatile, unrestrained and at times, violently chaotic, while the Occupy movement was focused on shutting down business as usual, which can, in the language of astrology, be seen as a Saturnian tactic. Moving into the mainstream of US politics – what is left of it, we see the neoliberal agenda on both sides of the aisle, attempting to fashion government into a Saturnian structure, facilitating Uranian free market capitalism and serving as a strong deterrent to anything getting in its way.

On the fringes, we have an ultraconservative group on the right using Uranian tactics to push for the Saturnian goal of hamstringing a government that is seen as the enemy, and a progressive/socialist group on the left using Saturnian tactics to push for Uranian goals of equality, inclusion of all voices, and an agenda that works toward the greater common good. Both ends are feeding the middle, which is forcing a dialogue between the radical extremes, increasingly torn asunder at the opposition, and on into the waning square.

One last note about the opposition: it also brought the swine flu pandemic of 2009-2010, which can be understood as a precursor to what we are experiencing now. According to figures issued by the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2011/08/study-puts-global-2009-h1n1-infection-rate-11-21>), this pandemic affected anywhere from 700 million to 1.4 billion people globally, which is 11 – 21% of the total population. Then, as now, precautions were recommended along with vaccines, embraced by some and adamantly opposed by others.

Where Does That Leave Us Now?

So, have we learned anything from all of this? At the very least, it seems clear that this business of enantiodromia is not for the faint of heart, and that we are still very much in the “torn asunder” phase of the process.

On the one hand, we have right-wing extremists pushing for the dismantling of a democracy, by violence if necessary, that in their view, no longer serves the will of the people. There seems to be a real confusion on the right between vaccine mandates and freedom, but I believe this is merely the surface layer of a deeper distrust of a government beholden to corporate interests at the expense of the many. In this sentiment, if I am right in assessing it, I don't think they are entirely misguided, even if their irrational hatred is misdirected, via the culture-war mindset, toward the left instead of the middle, and their tactics are likely to bring the whole house of cards crashing down around all of our heads.

Having grown up in the 60s, I can also remember when this was a Uranian revolution more typical of the left. But the left now, it seems to me, is much more conservative (read Saturnian) than it used to be. We (and yes, I include myself on the left) are trying to hold the line against the onslaught of change that is potentially wildly out of control – working to mitigate the now-unstoppable forces of climate change; fighting for a level playing field for those at the bottom of the economic pecking order; scrambling to shore up a democratic system that appears to unraveling before our

eyes; and trying to get back to some sense of normalcy in the face of a deadly virus that shows no signs of slowing down. The right is trying to tear it all down; the left is trying to prop it all up. Witness the enantiodromia at work.

The irony is that both ends of the political spectrum are a reaction to the existing system, which continues to serve the neoliberal agenda – unrestrained business as usual – in the face of rising stakes that make corporate capitalism an increasingly unsustainable venture in a world that can no longer afford it.

As a relevant aside, I might note here that the Internet economy – that only began slowly emerging at the beginning of this Saturn-Uranus cycle – is now the dominant force of the unlevel playing field between the haves and have-nots that fuels the current radical response. The richest man in the world is Jeff Bezos of Amazon, now worth \$177 billion; Bill Gates of Microsoft is #4 (worth \$124 billion); Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook is #5 (worth \$97 billion); Larry Ellison of Oracle is #7 (worth \$93 billion); Larry Page of Google is #8 (worth \$91.5 billion) and Sergey Brin of Google is #9 (worth \$89 billion) – 6 of the top 10 (<https://www.forbes.com/billionaires/>). It is the Internet billionaires, all catapulted to unprecedented wealth in this Saturn-Uranus cycle, that now typify the devastating income disparity that is the mark of unbridled neoliberal capitalism run amok.

Unless we can stop fighting each other and address this larger, more important issue – which affects all of us, then my guess is that by 2032, the beginning of the next Saturn-Uranus cycle, the US may, in some way that is likely to be unpleasant, suffer the same demise as the Soviet Union did at the beginning of the last cycle. We may survive as a nation, but our democracy may not. For as Uranus rages out of control, the only way to balance between Saturn and Uranus can be maintained is for Saturn to also ramp up. Historically, when such wide disparities exist between those in power and those who have no power, this generally means more totalitarian control.

The Saturn-Uranus cycle that began before this one saw the rise of both the US and the Soviet Union as world powers, temporarily working together during World War II to stop the rise of global fascism. Unfortunately, the war did not actually do that. Fascism instead simply went underground for the better part of a cycle and is now rising again. Currently, it is estimated that 54% of the human race now lives under autocratic rule (<https://www.smh.com.au/national/under-cover-of-covid-there-s-been-troubling-news-about-tyranny-s-rise-20200928-p55zxc.html>), and the pandemic has provided a convenient smokescreen for those with totalitarian pretensions – leaders like Erdogan (Turkey), Orban (Hungary) or Duterte (Philippines), to name just a few (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/03/how-authoritarians-are-exploiting-covid-19-crisis-grab-power>). Although we have been fond of saying, “It can’t happen here,” after January 6, we know that it can, and it very well might – unless we can find a way to work together to change a political system built on inequality, injustice, environmentally unsustainable practices, and unaccountability.

As I see it, the challenge during this waning square is to enter into a real dialogue about what is happening to our country, a dialogue that goes beyond pointing fingers or hyperbole about the demonic intentions of the other side. The resolution of the enantiodromia takes genuine maturity, and unless we can muster it, individually and collectively, we will be torn asunder. There is no other choice. As a people, we can’t come out of this intact if we are blindly lashing out at an enemy that we consider blind. To quote Jung again, unless we can “*admit at least the relative validity of all*

human opinion," so that "the opposition (between Saturn and Uranus) loses something of its irreconcilable character," we will be torn asunder.

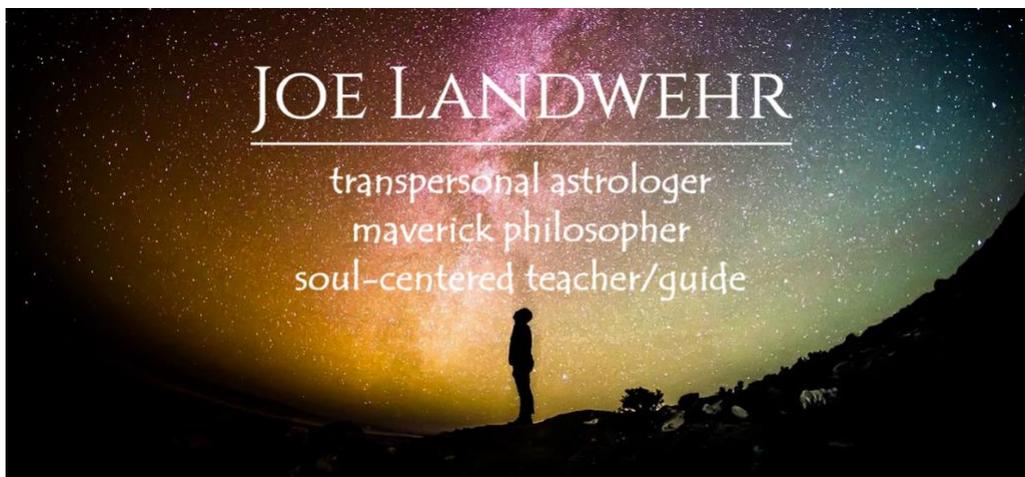
Quote of the Month

from the character Aunt Lydia in the novel *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood
after being rounded up with other professional women
by the revolutionaries of Gilead

To pass the time I berated myself. Stupid, stupid, stupid: I'd believed aa that claptrap about life, liberty, democracy and the rights of the individual I'd soaked up at law school. These were eternal verities and we would always defend them. I'd depended on that, as if on a magic charm.

You pride yourself on being a realist, I told myself, so face the facts. There's been a coup here in the United States, just as in times past in so many other countries. Any forced change of leadership is always followed by a move to crush the opposition. The opposition if led by the educated, so the educated are the first to be eliminated. You're a judge, so you are the educated, like it or not. They won't want you around.

None of us was allowed to go to the bathroom. Trickle of pee appeared, running down the bleachers towards the playing field. This treatment was supposed to humiliate us, break down our resistance, I thought; but resistance to what? We weren't spies, we had no secret information we were holding back, we weren't the soldiers of an enemy army. Or were we? If I looked deep into the eyes of one of these men, would there be a human being looking back out at me? And if not, then what?



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