

# Uranus-Pluto: War and Violence

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Early in this century, more than a decade ago, when I initially began seriously studying the Uranus-Pluto alignment that elevates the significance of the 2010s to critical importance for civilization, one of the first qualities of the first-quarter square between those two outer planets that caused me to ponder what might happen was the fact that Uranus is moving through Aries during the alignment. In addition to Uranus' sign position, the Aries-Capricorn square is particularly provocative.

In its most basic symbolism, Uranus in Aries indicates the awakening into action at the individual level. Considered from that very general standpoint, the implications are not particularly shocking or disturbing. The rebellious, revolutionary impulse of Uranus in the context of a square to Pluto from Aries to Capricorn indicates the great likelihood that selected individuals will commit themselves actively to challenging authority, institutions, government, and the status quo of cultural rules and regulations. Whatever the "ordinary" amount of individual disobedience against authority would be, during the decade of the 2010s, this tendency will likely be enlarged in quantity, heightened in dramatic quality, and made more eccentric and willful. That's easy to understand from the essential symbolism, interesting, and significant, but not particularly worrisome.

However, certain more particular implications of Arian symbolism are enough to give one pause in concern. Aries is not only the impulse to act in ways that are physical, kinetic, pointed, urgent, and passionate, nor merely the drive to be "born" into individual personhood, and not just sexual desire. Aries also "governs" war and violence in general. When Aries is activated as the provocateur in the Uranus-Pluto square in the dynamic tension of juxtaposition to the institutions of society associated with Capricorn, the symbolic possibilities dramatically increase that we would see increased war and violence. That's a given. The other side of the coin, however, is that war and violence may become the target of various movements to change the status quo of what is considered acceptable in civilization.

Peace is routinely given lip service in society as a noble good. At the first sign of conflict, however, peace is thrown under the bus. Turning the other cheek may have been Jesus' way, but society has long ignored it as wimpy and insufficiently masculine. Anti-war movements have always existed — they ebb and flow from

time to time — and non-violence as a way of life is always embraced by some, but both of these have remained in the minority and are generally disenfranchised, mocked, or otherwise given short shrift by the mainstream culture. This decade represents a possible exception to that marginalizing.

From my vantage point then, back at the beginning of the century, the thought that extreme and explosive possibilities for war and violence might quite possibly occur in the 2010s, and in sudden, unexpected conflagrations, was extremely worrisome to me. Could this imply something as terrifying as World War or nuclear holocaust? On the other hand, the alternate or perhaps parallel possibility of potent mass movements arising with equal suddenness to protest war and violence, triggered by specific events and galvanized in the public mind by committed individuals willing to take a stand, was a different manifestation of the same symbolism that would be infinitely preferable.

As I continued to study the alignment and probe its possible meanings, many other profound implications became obvious to me. Leaving aside for the moment all those other possibilities (about which I have written at length in other commentaries) and focusing solely on the connection of the Uranus-Pluto alignment to violence in all its forms — both for and against — whether state-sponsored and institutionalized or randomly perpetrated by individuals, and, conversely, whether opposed by individuals or groups, the 2010s began to appear to me as a decade that would probably contain profound developments unlike any we have seen before.

I was worried, though. How could I write about violence as a coming focus of the 2010s without scaring the bejeesus out of my readers? That was something I spent a lot of time thinking about, especially after 9/11 and America's knee-jerk reaction to begin an endless "War on Terror" and haul off to invade Afghanistan and Iraq. Could Bin Laden have been more pleased at our response? Al Qaeda could not harm us in any significant way, but it could — and did — fool us into harming ourselves. There it was, the predictable escalation of cycles of violence, gearing up years before the Uranus-Pluto alignment even became effective. Would that escalation boil over into something of unimaginable proportions later, during or after the alignment?

Now it is December 2014. We are halfway through the decade of the 2010s, having lived through many years of "set-up" to the challenges and changes that will manifest in the years ahead. If I look through the lenses of war and violence in light of the Uranus-Pluto Aries-Capricorn square (now approaching its culmination), what has occurred and is occurring is astonishing. With the exception of the Fukushima meltdown, we have managed so far to avoid nuclear holocaust, but everything else I anticipated as possible back at the beginning of the century about war and violence in the 2010s has indeed come to pass.

I don't know the exact figures for America's 21st-century wars of choice, but I'm fairly certain that the cost can be measured in the trillions of dollars and tens of thousands of people killed, maimed, or scarred for life. The Columbine school massacre of 1999, which carried the unmistakable signature of disturbed individuals (Uranus) lashing out violently (Aries) against fellow students in a public high school (Pluto in Capricorn) was only the first of an ongoing series of such tragedies. The bungled wars and ill-fated occupations to rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted in a myriad of unintentional consequences and unwanted repercussions, including the conversion of Afghanistan into the world's largest opium/heroin producer, and in Iraq the rise of ISIS/ISIL, the most deranged and violent of the "terrorists." ISIS is essentially composed of thugs and psychopaths who kill anyone and everyone who disagrees with them. Sadly, they are largely the result of our wrong-headed decisions and cavalier actions.

And yet, in quite surprising fashion, opposition to violence as the acceptable status quo (business-as-usual) is finally beginning to manifest. The military-industrial complex may be chugging right along so far, but at other, more personal levels, the American public is starting to notice just how violent our society is. A revolution is already underway to reform the rules of professional sports, specifically professional football and its "farm system" in the colleges, to reduce the violent harm that results in brain damage as well as other serious injuries for its participants. Also in sports, the past year's episodes of much-publicized domestic abuse have provoked the launch of a mass movement to increase public awareness about the pandemic of violence inflicted on people (usually women and children) we supposedly love, long a basic fact of our culture but largely swept under the rug.

Even more recently, the deaths of numerous black citizens at the hands of police have provoked an extraordinary eruption of protest, with thousands of angry, outraged people taking to the streets to say "WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!!!" Many conservative or right-wing pundits have ignored, minimized, or belittled this burgeoning movement, but, in light of Uranus-Pluto, I predict that it will not go away. Yes, disrespect among the races is a tough nut that will take a long time to crack---racism is at the heart of America's shadow---but this sudden uprising is the most significant protest since the social justice/racial equality movement of the mid-20th century, which culminated precisely when Pluto and Uranus came together in the 1960s, the last time they were aligned before the 2010s.

And now today the harsh light of reality is shining on the CIA's egregious and unforgivable use of torture over the past decade and a half as a routine and widespread tactic against detainees and suspects in the "War on Terror." Not just the CIA but the government itself has consistently gone to extreme lengths to justify these illegal and immoral activities, including twisting the law to allow such practices, lying outright about them, or otherwise hiding the misdeeds from public view. When authorities act as criminals and are shielded from redress by

powerful institutions of culture, no citizen is safe. The revelations of Abu Ghraib may have fizzled, but the issue of torture just won't go away. Makes it hard to tell the good guys from the bad, but we can be sure that perpetrators exist on both sides of the fence. The quaint notion of not lowering ourselves to the level of our adversaries, which America always claims, seems to have been jettisoned from the get-go. No, we may not cut off people's heads on video, but we maintain many facilities around the globe, mostly secret, where detainees have died from our ill treatment of them. They flew planes into our buildings; we use drones and missiles to strike back. The moral high ground is a propaganda fiction.

All this leads me to the rather simple point of my commentary.

I understand and accept that human beings are among the most aggressive species on this planet. Our big brains are brilliant at inventing new and more efficient ways to kill. Violence is coded into our DNA. It's part of who we have always been, and it's not going away any time soon. Some might suggest that if we were half as good at love as we are at war, the world would be very different place, but those proportions seem about right — we **are** half as good at love as we are at war, and the result is the world we have.

In fairness, violence is compelling and occurs inevitably as one facet of earthly life. But the lion killing the wildebeest at the water hole on the African Savannah is part of mother nature's plan; it is neither wrong nor tragic. Lions cannot become vegetarians, they kill only what they need to eat, and everything eats everything else to keep life in balance. People do die in accidents, and natural disasters cannot be eradicated, however rare and sporadic they may be. Violence will always be a mundane component of the natural world, and it will touch each of us from time to time.

What I'm talking about, however, is not the risk of natural violence, but rather the intentional violence that human beings inflict as harm to other human beings and to the world in general, which includes other species and the earth itself, as well as the unconscious violence that is allowed and even fostered by longstanding social attitudes. This latter form of violence is frequently called by other names to keep it from being recognized for what it is, and thus enshrined as acceptable in cultural norms. For example, that kind of violence sometimes ensues from the belief that economics trumps every other value. Throughout history, workers have died violently as a result of unsafe job conditions, such as Chinese blown up by explosives while building the transcontinental railroad, Irishmen suffocated while digging foundations for the Brooklyn Bridge, or women seamstresses burned to death in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire. But then, the have-nots have always been expendable.

Whether unconscious or intentional, violence will undoubtedly remain in our psyches, but its only proper home is in fantasies and dreams, since it is part of

our Dark Side. If allowed to continue being expressed — even unconsciously — in our real-life interactions with others and the world, it may eventually destroy us, or, stated more accurately, we may destroy ourselves.

As we approach the pinnacle of the Uranus-Pluto alignment, which defines the archetypal currents flowing through the zeitgeist, now is the perfect time to stand up in protest against all forms of unjust violence that corrupt our civility and threaten even the future of civilization itself. To make that long uphill climb toward a better, more loving world, we need the emotion of **anger**.

Many people believe that anger is a “negative” emotion. It certainly can be when perverted into rage, which is a blind lashing out, or repressed, so that it squeezes out sideways in passive-aggressive form. Neither manifestation is mindful; both are unconscious venting of energies we can’t bear to feel, much less master. Passion is the energy of creation; passion *makes* the world. Anger is a similar energy alerting us to the need to *remake* the world when our creation has gone wrong.

Anger is not the same as violence. Felt alone, in isolation from others, anger may be uncomfortable and difficult to handle. Experienced with others who feel the same way, however, anger becomes a powerful force — a call to action and a sign of involvement and concern. We do not get angry about what we don’t care about. Anger is a passionate form of care, especially when shared and used as fuel — the fire in the belly — to achieve a common goal.

This is the time to move into the light whatever forms of cruelty and needless suffering have remained masked, falsely justified, or hidden in the shadows. We need not hurt anyone to express our shared anger; just showing it together plainly is immensely powerful. For social institutions, one person’s anger is meaningless. 10,000 angry people, however, are a force with which to be reckoned. Only when our numbers reach critical mass do the powers-that-be take notice.

The social movements that emerge from this extraordinary moment will need to be organized and coordinated, renewed occasionally, and sustained over the long haul, but a better time to start will not come around, so, if you feel angry about the way society operates, own the emotion, find others who feel the same, and give your anger a collective voice.