

\*\*\*\*\*

# THE HERBST NEWSLETTER

*astrological-cultural-spiritual-political views & opinions*

--- Thoughts, dates, and reminders about our lives as members of the craziest species on this lovely planet. Like a message in a bottle washing up on the sandy shores of consciousness ---

*Issue #124 – July 2010*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear friends,

Last month's newsletter discussed the first of this summer's two impressive alignments, the overlay of a lunar eclipse that aligned perfectly with the existing outer-planet T-square to produce a stunning grand cross.

This month I discuss the second alignment, also a grand cross, that will occur in early August, and explain why it may be less significant than assumed. As a balancing contrast to that technical astrology, this newsletter concludes with an abridged rant on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion and subsequent environmental disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.

--Bill Herbst

## Commentary: **The August Grand Cross**

This summer's initial major alignment, the June 26th overlay of a lunar eclipse onto the Saturn-Uranus-Pluto T-square, was significant because it represented the union of two separate astrological configurations, each of which carries major implications over time.

The outer-planet T-square, with its exact relationships between Saturn-Uranus and Saturn-Pluto, is the dominant alignment in the heavens for four full years, from 2008-2011, defining a tonality of particularly powerful conflicts in the archetype field that set the stage for the critical mass period of 2012, when the revolutionary upheavals of the Uranus-Pluto square take center stage as we embark on our long rollercoaster ride through the rest of the decade of the 2010s.

The June lunar eclipse also has natural significance over a roughly six-month period between eclipse pairs. The most recent previous eclipse was an annular solar on January 14th, 2010, so the effective period of the June-July pair of eclipses begins roughly halfway between that last solar eclipse and the lunar eclipse of June 26th. That midpoint date is April 5th. Effective periods of eclipses

are ballpark dates rather than exact timings, so that April 5th date should be given a week or two on either side.

The next eclipse is a solar on January 4th, 2011, so the effective periods of the current eclipse pair ends around October 1st, give or take a week or two.

Coincidentally, the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion occurred on April 20th, right near the beginning of the eclipse's effective period. I will have more to say about that event later in the newsletter.

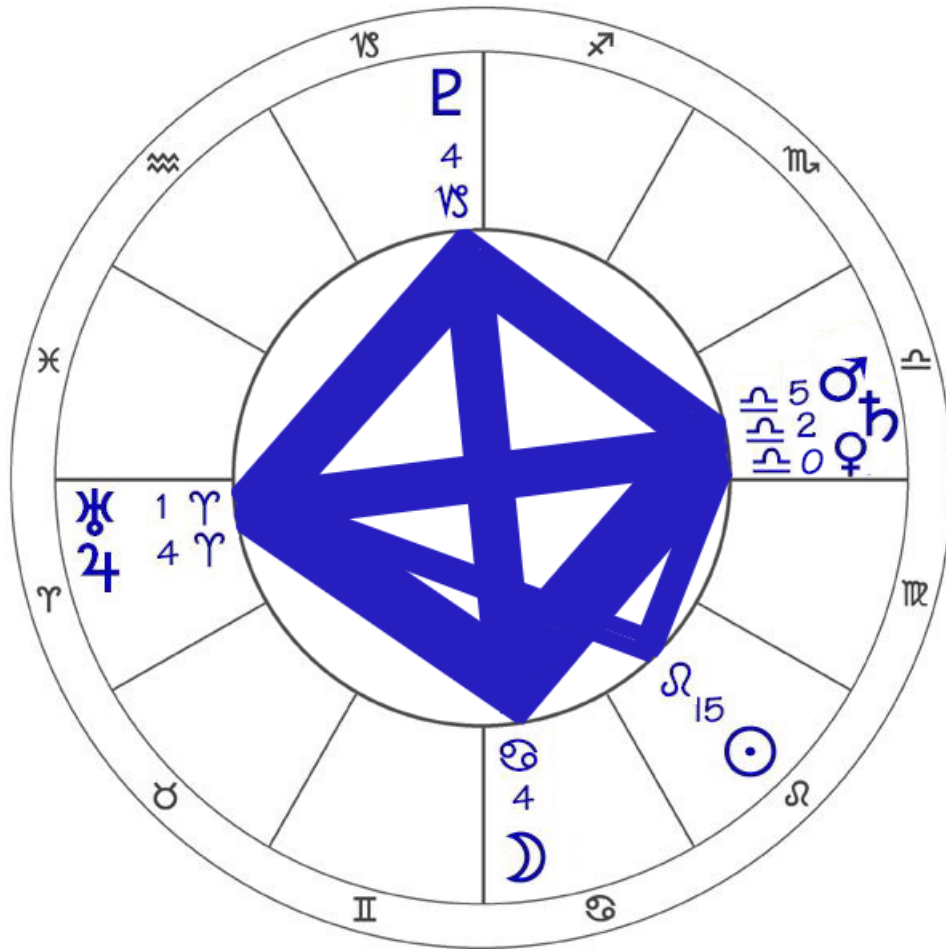
So, we have a four-year configuration aligned with a six-month configuration to ramp up the intensity of the conflicts indicated by the T-square, namely, social confrontations as the status quo breaks down (Saturn oppose Uranus from Libra to Aries), with the ruling elites working overtime to resurrect that status quo in spite of its obvious unsustainability. Meanwhile, the Saturn-Pluto last-quarter square from Libra to Capricorn implies ruthless power struggles and revelations concerning formerly secret abuses of power at every institutional level in society, extending from government through business, education through healthcare, and into the military. The powers-that-be are fighting, not for their lives, but to maintain their positions of power and influence.

The June lunar eclipse, which occurred on the Cancer-Capricorn axis, brought into focus the opposed issues of personal security (Cancer Sun) through sanctity of home and family versus institutional and governmental control. The problem for the ruling elites becomes how to keep the public docile and unquestioning even as their remaining illusions of security are shattered? One answer, for better or worse, is to turn up the already-overbearing volume of the American Dream Hologram through media chatter and endless advertising about our "unlimited, have-it-now" consumer paradise of flat-screen TVs and new cars.

So, the June configuration, the Saturn-Uranus-Pluto T-square became four outer planets as Jupiter conjoined Uranus in Aries. Those four become seven in the Grand Cross configuration as the Moon conjoined Pluto at the apex of the T-square and the Sun and Mercury filled in the missing fourth point (or bull's-eye) opposite in Cancer. Seven planets including both Lights in an alignment whose significance lasts for years. Wow.

By contrast, the August Grand Cross is quite another animal, very similar in one way and very different in another.

Here is the chart of the coming Grand Cross:



## 6-7 August 2010

Starting with the basic cardinal T-square, now four outer planets strong (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Pluto), both Mars and Venus have joined the party by moving into Libra, resulting in a six-planet T-square. The Sun in Leo will be exactly at the imbalanced stress point (sesquiquadrate Uranus and semisquare Venus). And finally, the Moon in Cancer will fill in the T-square's bull's-eye and complete the eight-planet Grand Cross. Of the major natal symbols, only Mercury, Neptune, and Chiron are left out.

Well, an eight-planet configuration is certainly meaningful, but there's a serious problem, which has to do with the duration of the alignment's effective life-span.

The Moon completes the configuration and forms the Grand Cross. Without the Moon, we don't have a Grand Cross, just a high-tension T-square with an imbalanced Sun focus.

Why is this a problem? Because the Moon is the fastest moving body in the heavens, traversing an average of 12-14° through the zodiac every day, thus changing signs every 2+ days. If we use an allowable orb for civilizational transits of  $\pm 10^\circ$ , then the effective period of the Grand Cross is when the Moon is between 24° Gemini and 11° Cancer. That arc in the zodiac translates to 28

hours of Moon travel, from about 1:00 p.m. GMD on August 6th through 5:00 p.m. on August 7th.

Before and after that one day, no Grand Cross.

This is always true of any Moon-completed multi-planet configurations. They are extremely short-lived. And besides their brief half-life, they are not rare. In fact, they happen all the time. During the life of any longer-term civilizational transit or aspect pattern, the Moon frequently completes more complex but brief alignments.

Consider:

- **Any** square between two or more outer planets becomes a Moon-completed T-square TWICE in every month of its existence, but for only 36 hours.
- **Any** opposition between two or more outer planets becomes a Moon-completed T-square TWICE in every month of its existence, but for only 36 hours.
- **Any** trine between two or more outer planets becomes a Moon-completed Grand Trine ONCE in every month of its existence, but for only 36 hours.
- **Any** sextile between two or more outer planets becomes a Moon-completed Yod/Finger of God ONCE in every month of its existence, but for only 36 hours.
- **Any** T-square between three or more outer planets becomes a Moon-completed Grand Cross ONCE in every month of its existence, but for only 36 hours.

The result of these two conflicting measures of importance is a divided judgment. On the basis of the number of planets involved — EIGHT! — the August Grand Cross is one helluva configuration. On the basis of its durability, it is a laughable nothing, a mere blip on the radar screen whose significance is gone almost before it arrives.

In balance, the August alignment is certainly worth discussing and taking note of, but more as a seven-planet T-square with an imbalanced stress point, rather than as an eight-planet Grand Cross.

Important or not, what are the basic implications of this second summer alignment? Whether we consider this a T-Square or a Grand Cross, the presence of an imbalanced stress point (semisquare-sesquiquadrate) holds a central key. Since that stress point falls right on the Sun in mid-Leo, my simplest deciphering of the symbolic meaning is a crisis in leadership caused by the willingness of most current leaders (in government and business) to lie their asses off about what's happening by obfuscation or outright denial. The addition of the intimacy planets Venus and Mars in Libra reveals a strong wish for social harmony, however superficial or false that peacefulness may be. With those Libran positions bracketing Saturn within the existing T-square, authorities will try to put on a happy face in the midst of bad news wherever we turn. At almost every level of social concern — financial, economic, political, environmental, military, etc. — the powers-that-be and their proxies in the corporate-run mainstream media feed us an endless stream of lies, propaganda, and spin. George Orwell must be smiling in his grave.

Lying by authorities is nothing new, of course. Lying itself is part of the human condition, and lies on the part of authorities have been a staple since society was first organized into dominance hierarchies. What is different here is the desperate effort to maintain control and resurrect a permanently screwed status quo, to keep the terrible game going awhile longer.

The authorities will succeed, too, at least for a time, but with increasing pockets of failure all the way through 2011 and into 2012, when the jig will be up.

## The Deepwater Horizon Disaster

I received an email this month from a reader in the UK who wrote:

*“i think you're way off here on this summer and talking about money. i think we're about to have massive loss of life in the gulf. but i hope you're right, and it's just about money.”*

The fact that I have not yet written about the Deepwater Horizon explosion and subsequent environmental disaster does not mean that I am unaware of its profound significance, both as an horrific event with nearly incalculable repercussions, and also as a symbolic message about just how dangerous modern civilization's disrespect for the biosphere has become.

Messing with the oceans because of our increasingly ravenous and growing hunger for fossil fuels is an unconscionable decision made by an industry with almost no transparency of management or public accountability. Most of the total life on this garden planet resides not on the earth's thin skin of land, but under water, in the deep oceans, where life flourishes at great pressures and in total darkness, illumined only by the firefly-like phosphorescence of various self-luminous species. Our human existence is made possible by this oceanic incubator through the creation of oxygen and sequestering of carbon.

Because the oceans are so vast, we have made the mistake of regarding them and their bounty as infinite. As the human population has ballooned, efforts to restrain fishing have been too little and too late. Already, stocks of many edible fish species are nearly exhausted. To cite but a single example among many, the great schools of blue fin tuna are 90% gone, decimated like the buffalo by our rampant overfishing. As bad as that is, however, this rupture of the ocean floor in the Gulf could conceivably threaten oceanic life in ways that make overfishing look like a minor infraction.

One might say that the Deepwater Horizon disaster is “unimaginable,” except that it's all too believable, predictable, and even expected. This is, after all, what human beings do — create complex technologies to perform herculean feats, only to suffer periodic failures (some catastrophic) through a combination of fallibilities: oversight, irresponsibility, greed, and/or sheer incompetence. Though the jury is still out, this particular screw-up in the Gulf of Mexico may be the worst accidental man-made disaster EVER, in all known history. We have literally

ruptured the earth and have no controllable means of plugging the toxic leak. Yes, we can detonate a nuclear bomb and hope to turn the bedrock into glass, but I wonder how “controllable” such a desperate attempt may be.

Having said that, I disagree with the UK reader that my newsletters are “missing the mark” because I write about money and institutional economics. Anyone who has read my newsletters over the years knows that I’m a tree-hugger from way back, a dyed-in-the-wool environmentalist who regards our human devastation of the biosphere as insensitive, stupid, and proof that our vainglorious pose of self-congratulatory superiority is nothing more than hubris.

I honor all life, not just human life, and I am saddened beyond words and deeply ashamed at what my species has wrought in our headlong pursuit of wealth and power. Over the last 200 years, humans have been caused the largest species extinction event since the departure of the dinosaurs, and it is ongoing, with no end in sight. I have no patience with those who deny or minimize human impact on the biosphere. Their wrong-headed insensitivity is unforgivable in my book.

Unfortunately, no amount of personal despair over the sheer ugliness of modern civilization nor public concern over our crippling abuse of the biosphere has even a snowball’s chance in hell of successfully lobbying the industrial machine to scale back or power down. The only motivations that really matter in stopping the wholesale pillaging and rape of this planet surround money and economics, for two reasons: The power elites understand (and care about) little else, and the vast majority of collective decisions are made on that basis alone. Why will our military never leave Iraq and Afghanistan? *Economic control of energy resources*. That is the bottom-line of policy at every level from state through federal to global.

Environmentalism has turned out to be only one of many far-sighted, progressive movements born in the 1960s that were effectively gutted by the juggernaut of reactionary backlash that emerged with the Reagan presidency in 1980. Organic farming and holistic medicine were similar casualties, not that any of these could be stopped outright (far too many people care passionately about the environment, healthy food, and alternative health care for the movements to be literally halted), but they were all subtly co-opted by the commercial marketplace or watered-down by political maneuvering.

More generally, the public hasn’t arisen in arms against the class warfare that’s been intentionally and aggressively conducted for the past 30 years, which saw the largest theft in history of wealth shifted upwards from the pockets of the middle class into the already-overflowing coffers of the ultra-rich. Millions of regular folks were taken in by lies and propaganda used to mask the reality of what was happening, most specifically, the allure of the false promise that anyone could become rich and upwardly mobile in America if only all the damned governmental regulations and intrusive constraints against “free market” capitalism were dismantled or removed to allow the magical engine of commerce to create infinite wealth out of thin air. Meanwhile, the “environmental movement” went corporate, with six-figure salaries for bigwigs who lunch with other lobbyists.

We are coming to the end of that particular shell game. And the key to the ending is the institutional, economic, and financial collapse that has, in fact, already begun and will soon reach more visible stages.

Will the Deepwater Horizon disaster be the trigger that sparks a real national debate about our future around energy and the environment? That remains to be seen. I might say that I hope so, except that I am long past running on hope.

\*\*\*\*\*

This newsletter is free. No subscription fee is charged. Donations are accepted with my gratitude, but making a donation is entirely voluntary, not mandatory.

If you'd like to make a donation, the quickest way is via PayPal. You can send money from a checking account, credit card, or debit card. To make a PayPal donation, click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/2n7h3x>

If you wish to send a check by mail, here is my mailing address: 822 1st Street, Florence, OR 97439-9346.

My heartfelt thanks to the many subscribers who have donated. Your support is very much appreciated.

**To unsubscribe** from the newsletter, simply respond to this email and type the word "unsubscribe" in the header.

\*\*\*\*\*

My web site -- <http://www.billherbst.com> -- has information about my professional work with clients---fees, scheduling, content, etc.

Please read "Sessions Intro" and "Sessions FAQ." The links are in the upper right corner of my home page.

\*\*\*\*\*

[© 2010, by Bill Herbst, all rights reserved. Permission is granted by the author to forward this email, but only in its entirety, without additions or deletions of text.]