

# The Saturn-Uranus Cycle

by Bill Herbst

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Together, Saturn and Uranus form one of the ten major cycles in what I call civilizational astrology. The primary symbolic meaning of the cycle has to do with social stability and the institutional structure of organizations that control the flow of power in shaping and implementing policies about how our affairs will be conducted in a given society and within civilization in general. The cycle is sensitive to the ebb and flow of stresses between the status quo (meaning whatever structures in government, commerce, and culture are in place at any particular span of time) and the pressures that arise for dramatic changes in policy or revolutionary revisions in authority.

Saturn is about maintaining orderly and consistent organization in ways that have stood the tests of time (i.e., are traditional and conservative). Stated more simply, Saturn resists change. Uranus, on the other hand, is prone to upset the applecart whenever the hierarchical pecking order already in place doesn't produce the best or hoped-for results. Uranus is also more comfortable about non-traditional and even experimental methods of establishing authority.

The upside of Saturn in this is dependability and efficiency. Society runs more smoothly when Saturn is in charge. The downside of Saturn shows up in aging institutions that are subject more and more over time to corruption and even malfeasance. Saturn cares little for ethics or social justice, instead being concerned mainly with a clear chain of command. Those who give the orders must be obeyed, and their authority must not be challenged.

The upside of Uranus is in a periodic revitalizing of society and culture through swift or sweeping reform of structures and policies. Such changes can be immensely refreshing in reminding humans of the purpose of society, which is participation in a collective family that fosters love and security for everyone. The downside of Uranus is social disruption or cultural conflicts that may achieve little or nothing in the way of true reform, and instead simply substitute one corrupt or dictatorial master for another. Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.

The Saturn-Uranus cycle is 43-45 years in length, not quite half a century. The four quarters of the cycle (spring, summer, autumn, and winter) are roughly eleven years long each. Every quarter is kicked off by a major Saturn-Uranus transit (conjunction at 0°, first-quarter square at 90°, opposition at 180°, and last-quarter square at 270°) that is typically 1-3 years in duration, depending on

the orb used. These transits define turning points within the overall meaning of a particular Saturn-Uranus cycle. We can think of them as crisis periods of social-cultural evolutionary process. This means that we've been in one such period for the past three years, and we're about to come out the other side to see what we can then make of whatever we've realized to better navigate the eight years ahead that flesh out the next quarter (or season) of the cycle.

Below is a list of the five Saturn-Uranus cycles from the mid-19th century to the end of the 21st century, showing where in the zodiac all five began, with a shorthand meaning for each cycle in terms of the evolution of society and civilization:

1851 – 1894	early Taurus	revolutions in land, demography, class, and wealth through colonialism and industrial consolidation
1895 – 1940	late Scorpio	scientific revolutions and the end of colonialism; when power overwhelmed humanity (World War One and the Great Depression)
1941 – 1985	late Taurus	giants in conflict – the power struggle for command of geopolitics and global economics (World War Two and the Cold War)
1986 – 2030	late Sagittarius	rising wealth inequality, along with challenges to the hegemonic hierarchy of global power through pressures pushing us toward a multi-polar world
2031 – 2075	late Gemini	the end of globalization and a new revolution of renewed tribalism through necessary re-localization

The current Saturn-Uranus cycle began in 1986. Although history is complex and multi-faceted, so that every cycle in civilizational astrology symbolizes many different but interconnected practical meanings and interpretive dimensions in society and culture, I'd suggest that the most significant thrust thus far of this current Saturn-Uranus cycle has been the intentional effort here in America and around the world to change the allocation and distribution of wealth. We are witnessing class war waged in its most sophisticated and advanced methods. The goal has been to move as much wealth as possible upward into the coffers of the ruling elites, who tend already to be the richest among us. This shift has been achieved by various means, the most critical of which was the intentional dismantling of prior restraints on the financial sector of the economy that were put in place after the Great Depression of the 1930s to minimize corruption, increase economic and thus social stability, and insure at least a modestly more equitable distribution of wealth.

Another technique used in achieving wealth transfer upwards was regressive social engineering through the implementation by government of social austerity for the lower 80% of the population. This was achieved in part by removal of as many welfare programs as possible from the former social safety network, and in part by draconian "law-and-order" policies that targeted certain demographic

groups and created a lucrative prison industry with a dramatically enlarged population of inmates.

Yet another measure has been constant propaganda to promote the rise of “culture wars” that pit different groups of the population against each other. This has served to keep the public occupied (and thus relatively compliant) while bald-faced theft of huge amounts of what should be shared American wealth occurs in plain sight.

The first two of these techniques — financial legislation and social austerity — are clearly conspiratorial among the ruling elites. The “haves” have empowered themselves to grab ever more of the pie, while the “have-nots” are now given less and less. While some assert that the same conspiracy origins apply to the culture wars, I consider that to be more a *de facto* convenience in tone. The cultural issues that divide us represent very low-lying fruit, with conflicts easily fueled by passions provoked out of general ignorance on both sides. Whether I’m right or wrong about that is not a distinction that matters much, however. The end result is the same: What’s happened in this Saturn-Uranus cycle in terms of distribution of wealth is clearly criminal and devastating to America’s and humanity’s future.

The other dramatic meaning of the current Saturn-Uranus cycle that began in 1986 has been a rising challenge to the hegemonic world order established after World War Two, with America in the catbird seat as the dominant economic and military global power. We called the shots and the world mostly obeyed. America ran the casino and reaped the benefits, skimming the cream off the world’s milk. The collapse of the Soviet Union was trumpeted as America’s great victory in the 40-year Cold War, leaving us unchallenged atop the world. Actually, though, that foreshadowed an unraveling of both behemoths as the world began to shift away from hegemony and toward a multi-polar power axis.

The “proxy war” in Ukraine is America’s final attempt to defeat Russia before moving on to face off against China, but the outcome of that war — whenever it finally occurs and regardless of who claims victory — is unlikely to be positive for the U.S. Our reign as global dictator is fast coming to a close, and the American Empire, while still influential, will no longer be the dominant force it once was.

As of January of 2023, we are finishing up the last of four major Saturn-Uranus transits of this cycle, specifically, the last-quarter square of Saturn to Uranus in the heavens. For the past three years, Saturn has been moving through mid-Aquarius, perpendicular to Uranus in mid-Taurus. Using an orb of 10° (which is a commonly chosen orb among astrologers for major collective transits), the square began to show its effects in January of 2020, then became exact three times in 2021 (February 17th, June 14th, and December 24th), and finally has been gradually waning throughout 2023. In February of this year, the transit will “officially” be over, although in reality the concrete and social ramifications of its meanings are likely to continue to ripple out for some time.

This transit has meant that the cycle is now three-quarters done and is entering its final quarter. In the seasonal metaphor I'm fond of using, this implies that whatever was planted in the spring, grew into concrete manifestation in summer, came to fruition and was harvested in autumn, has now reached the beginning of winter, from where the cycle will lie fallow until 2031, when spring will return and bring with it a new Saturn-Uranus cycle that will define the stresses and struggles of the middle four decades of this 21st century.

Everything that happened in civilization from 1986 through 2019 — all the new developments in society and culture — have reached their culmination. Whatever the results were — good, bad, or indifferent — they are as obvious as they ever will be. Starting in 2020, however, something fundamental changed. Events occurred that forcibly detached us from experience of the past three decades. The message and challenge of the Saturn-Uranus last-quarter square transit is that we must let go of much of what has occupied our attention and driven our behavior over those past 30-some years.

We "farmed" very aggressively through the spring, summer, and autumn of the current cycle. Now the crop is in. We can begin the process of standing back to see and understand the full results and repercussions of what we created. It's time to become more thoughtful about what we've made and how all of that has affected who we are and how we interact with each other. All the events of the past three years, starting with COVID, then moving through the elections of 2020 and 2022, and into the worsening war in Ukraine, are showing us that business-as-usual is at an end. We've been going hell-bent for leather — *Damn the Torpedoes! Full speed ahead!!* — and that urgent pace has too often been unwise and to our detriment. Now we are being stopped, giving us the chance to assess where we are, so as to recognize what's coming down the pike that must be dealt with.

The next eight years are likely to see new developments and dramatic events, many of which will necessitate our slowing down, pulling back from the insane pace of the previous 30 years. The degree of thoughtfulness with which we collectively acknowledge this forced slow-down and accept what we must give up will carry great weight in determining whether we adapt or simply suffer.

Please keep in mind that this commentary is about only a single cycle. What I've written here is not meant to be a comprehensive overview, since it pertains exclusively to the Saturn-Uranus cycle. The last-quarter transit within that cycle that's been effective for the past three years ends this month, but that still leaves us with eight more years until the next Saturn-Uranus cycle begins. Throughout the rest of this decade, there is a great deal of work that must be done to gain a more detached and clear-eyed perspective, to get our collective heads screwed on at least a little bit straighter.

I'm not inclined to place any bets on whether or not we will do that.