

Astrological Patterns in 2013-2014

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As I publish this essay on my web site, we are fast approaching the notorious “End of the Mayan Calendar,” on December 21st, 2012. I’d like to deftly step over (and ignore, if possible) the popular interpretations, fantasies, and mythic fears about that crossroads, and move right past it to look at the years ahead, in terms of Civilizational Astrology.

As readers of my essays know, I use that title—Civilizational Astrology—to denote the study of collective human reality, both literal and psychological, as it applies to the social beehive we call civilization, through correspondences with the movements and changing patterns of the traditional outer planets in astrology: Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. By watching the elegant and kaleidoscopic dance of those five bodies in their shared cycles, and especially by noting specific multi-planet configurations they form in celestial geometry, astrology offers us considerable insight into the mysteries of what may lie ahead that might be relevant to collective humanity as a species, and our own individual lives as participants in society.

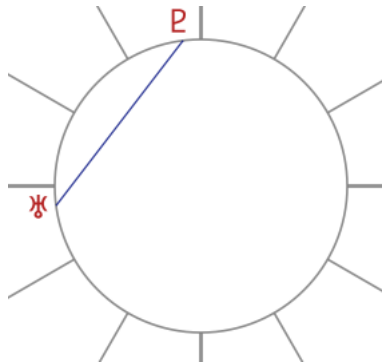
In this essay, I’ll take a sneek peak into the years 2013-2014, with just a little rollover into 2015-2016. Mostly, however, my focus is on the two years that are imminently about to unfold. I intend to discuss six different configurations that will form in alignments between or among the outer planets. Two of those will involve only a pair of planets, meaning that they are simple, straightforward outer-planet transits from well-known dyadic cycles (Uranus-Pluto and Jupiter-Saturn). The other four are more rare, non-recurring patterns that involve simultaneous alignments between at least three or more of the five major outer bodies.

Other astrologers may point to different or additional configurations based on other technical indicators in astrology, such as lunations, eclipses, minor bodies, symbolic progressions, etc. Astrology offers sufficient data to fuel nearly endless occurrences of potential meaning and discussion. The six I’ll discuss are simply what stands out and seems most relevant to me from within the system I use. My exclusion of patterns and timing that may be written about and promoted by other astrologers does not constitute a commentary on their work, either pro or con. I write about what I see in the heavens; other astrologers write about what

they see in the heavens. The sky is vast enough to encompass and dwarf whatever any of us sees in it.

OK, enough preface. Let's get on with what's coming up:

Uranus-Pluto First-Quarter Square



1st pass: 24 Jun 2012 at 8° 24' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus direct, Pluto retrograde)
2nd pass: 19 Sep 2012 at 6° 57' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus retrograde, Pluto direct)
*3rd pass: **20 May 2013** at 11° 14' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus direct, Pluto retrograde)*
*4th pass: **1 Nov 2013** at 9° 26' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus retrograde, Pluto direct)*
*5th pass: **21 Apr 2014** at 13° 34' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus direct, Pluto retrograde)*
*6th pass: **14 Dec 2014** at 12° 35' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus retrograde, Pluto direct)*
7th pass: 16 Mar 2015 at 15° 18' Aries/Capricorn (Uranus direct, Pluto direct)

The passage of Uranus in Aries at 90° (square) ahead of Pluto in Capricorn (first-quarter transition) is the most significant astrological alignment of the entire decade of the 2010s. Every other astrological configuration that will form during this decade is conditioned by and operates within the context of the symbolism of the Uranus-Pluto square. Quite simply, it is the singular event of monumental, overriding importance that defines humanity's challenges as we move into the 21st century.

Over the past ten years, I've written more than 80 essays and articles about this seminal event, most of which are archived on my web site and can be downloaded for free. While far beyond the scope of this essay (and my energy) to duplicate the information in those many essays, I will offer a brief summary of the transit and its symbolic implications. Many of my readers already are well aware of the profound significance of this Uranus-Pluto transit. For those who aren't, the text that follows represents only the briefest introduction.

Uranus and Pluto have a shared cycle that alternates between approximately 115 years and 140 years in length, with quarters that vary from roughly 25 to 50 years in duration.

Uranus and Pluto are both symbols in astrology that indicate experiences of profound transformation. Uranus is iconoclastic, revolutionary, shocking, both unexpected and unpredictable. Pluto is deeply unconscious, power-oriented, radically extreme, and focused on ultimate changes: death and rebirth, endings and new beginnings. Together, they indicate a social climate in civilization where radical shifts occur through world-changing events.

When we combine the lightning-bolt symbolism of Uranus with the earthquake/tsunami symbolism of Pluto, the pairing makes for dramatic developments that change the shape of culture through a series of seemingly unrelated events whose overall cumulative effects are both shocking and profound.

Although we can go back in history and see the signature of the Uranus-Pluto cycle again and again (for instance, Columbus' "discovery" of the New World occurred during a Uranus-Pluto transit, as did the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution), the planets themselves were discovered not that long ago (Uranus was first observed in 1781; Pluto's existence was predicted by astronomers in 1905 and finally confirmed in 1930). As a result, what these two outer bodies symbolize is a relatively new development in the shift of archetypes from the unconscious into full awareness in the collective psyche of humanity.

The case can be made that this current Uranus-Pluto transit is only the third in history that offers humanity the possibility of conscious participation toward "cleaning house"—giving up the old or antiquated and embracing the new or renewed. The two previous Uranus-Pluto transits occurred during the early-1930s and mid-1960s. The earlier decade witnessed the Great Depression and the rise of Fascism in Europe, presaging World War II, while the latter decade was a halcyon period of rebellion, breakout, and dizzying change in culture.

The current Uranus-Pluto alignment will be most significant to occur since the 1490s, which corresponded to the re-discovery of and subsequent rush to conquer and colonize the western hemisphere by European empires. Between June of 2012 and March of 2015, Uranus and Pluto will form exact 90° angles (squares) **seven** times. Contrast this with the *three* passes of the Uranus-Pluto conjunction in 1965-1966 and the *five* passes of the last-quarter square in 1930-1932, and right there we have a strong astrological indication that the 2010s will be the most important crossroads decade of the past two centuries.

Upheaval, breakdown, disruption, and even collapse of the status quo are hallmarks of Uranian-Plutonian periods. Occurring as it is now with Uranus in Aries and Pluto in Capricorn, the current alignment implies that large institutional structures are the primary targets of this cosmic wrecking ball, in both government, business, and social organizations. Economics and government will undergo unimaginable changes during this decade, as massive social institutions (corporations, education, medicine, etc.) break down under the stresses of economic disintegration. The vaunted global economy dreamt up by the power

elites during the 1930s and actually created during the second half of the 20th century may prove to have a very short half-life.

During 2013 and 2014, four of the seven exact squares between Uranus and Pluto occur. Critical mass was reached with the first pass in June 2012, followed by a second pass in September 2012. This means that we are metaphorically "in the eye of the hurricane" from now until the seventh and final pass takes place in late winter 2015 (which will really be the beginning of the sweeping changes that are to come). In other words, the transit is "cooking" now and will "come out of the oven and be served up" from mid-2015 on. The largest period of the Uranus-Pluto dance that sets up the eventual changes goes on in 2013-2014. What will this mean for regular people?

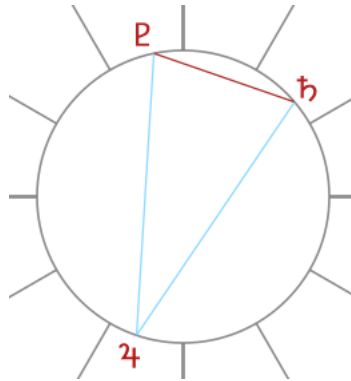
Well, not much or quite a bit, depending on one's beliefs and biases. For people who believe that the world as we know it is coming to a dramatic end, I think the answer to what will happen is not much. Not by cataclysmic or apocalyptic standards, anyway. On the other hand, for those people who believe government figures and mainstream media talk about an "economic recovery" or think that the keys to happiness are new cars, flat-screen TVs, and smart phones, the answer to what will happen is quite a bit. For those people, the shocks and disruptions awaiting us as the seeds of dramatic change are sown will be, well, shocking and disrupting. The surprises will likely be nasty for those people, since any changes requiring a re-thinking of their current lifestyles, based as they are on convenience and techno-dreaming, are seen as traumatic and negative.

In other words, it's all relative. Is the world ending? Well, sort of, but not really. The world that human beings have collectively created, a world characterized by extremes of inequality and imbalance, artificiality and fantasy, will undoubtedly be challenged from many different directions. That's already underway, of course, but Uranus and Pluto indicate an acceleration of those challenges.

There is much more to be said about the coming two years in light of the Uranus-Pluto square, but I will defer some of that to later sections of the essay.

For now, what's important to note is that all five of the other outer-planet alignments discussed below will naturally correspond to manifestations that conform to the tenor of these times, meaning that whatever the interior configurations imply will necessarily take shape within the context of the Uranian-Plutonian nature of this entire decade.

Yod



initial pass: December 2012 through early January 2013 (early winter)

final pass: March through early April 2013 (winter-spring transition)

overall period: December 2012 through early April 2013 (winter and early spring)

A Yod in astrology (sometimes alternatively called a “Finger of God”) is an isosceles triangle formed by two planets at the base that are 60° apart (sextile), with a third body at the inverse midpoint, 150° degrees (inconjunct) away from each of the base planets. Such triangles form frequently and may last only briefly—mere minutes or days—or, as in this less common instance, over a longer period of time—in this case, more than four months.

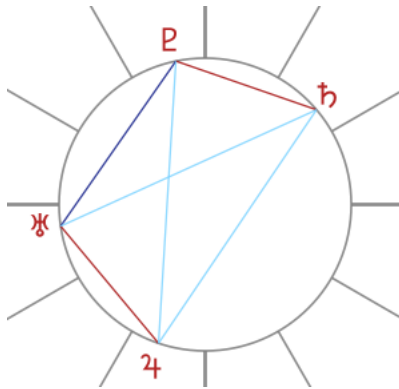
Yods are mysterious patterns in astrology. In general, we could say that the base symbols combine to produce surprising or unexpected results, the nature of which is indicated by the apex symbol. These results might seem logical in hindsight, but they wouldn’t be predictable in advance. This particular Yod forms with Saturn in Scorpio sextile Pluto in Capricorn as the base, and with Jupiter in Gemini as the apex of the triangle.

Ordinarily, most implementations of social policy or operation are aimed primarily at maintaining or bolstering the status quo, and then mainly in the short run. Our fixation with short-term solutions for problems has become pandemic in America. During the political campaigning of the previous two years, many serious and pressing topics of concern were simply off the table for discussion, since they are so vexing that no apparent or easy solutions exist.

Over the winter and early spring of 2013, those problems arise to be grappled with by those in positions of power and leadership. The yod signals a period where efforts may be required to go beyond business-as-usual, toward structural changes that aim to achieve greater fundamental stability long-term. The new agreements, however, are not likely to be revolutionary, radical, or even particularly progressive. Therein lies the paradox. Old school thinking will be

applied to try to address long-term solutions, and that effort is bound to fail. Interestingly, however, the public might be pleased, since certain fears could be temporarily assuaged. Whether or not such policies are successful or even real (as opposed to mere intentions or campaign promises), a burst of superficial optimism (Jupiter) in the body politic may result from efforts to deal with the hard issues (Saturn/Pluto) that face us.

Isosceles Trapezoid



period: March thru early April 2013 (as winter turns to spring)

An isosceles trapezoid is a quadrilateral figure with four points, which make four connected lines when the points are connected in an outer loop. The top and bottom lines are parallel to each other, with the two side lines being mirror images or reversed opposites. If the diagonal points are connected (making an 'X' inside the figure), those lines are also mirror opposites.

This highly unusual configuration is a brief but complex alignment formed by Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Pluto. This one is uniquely geometrical and is composed of six traditional astrological aspects in all: a square (the top line), two sextiles (the side lines), and three inconjuncts (the bottom and inner 'X' lines). It's a very elegant, beautiful figure, essentially two Yods tied together stressfully by a square, and a very dynamic alignment, if somewhat mysterious.

While extremely difficult to interpret because of its rarity and non-standard nature (we won't find this aspect pattern discussed in any astrological textbooks), the configuration expresses a geometric regularity that is striking and must be considered astrologically significant. So, let me take a stab at an interpretation that integrates all the configuration's salient characteristics—shape, angles, and particular planets:

This trapezoid signals a change in the general social zeitgeist away from escapism, avoidance, or denial and toward recognition, awareness, and greater appreciation for the reality of changes that are already upon us, as well as

additional changes that inevitably lie ahead—some imminent, and others longer-term. The trapezoid may correspond to external events or less tangible processes that let reality back in the door, so to speak, after being willfully shut out in favor of more comfortable, convenient, or pleasant illusions.

Let me give an example. An organized, well-funded movement exists in America that denies climate change, both as a human-created phenomenon and also as a serious concern for our future. The people who promote and participate in this reactionary movement tend to be either or both of two types: political and business-oriented right-wing conservatives who are anti-science or anti-government, or libertarian contrarian/iconoclasts who believe that science and government are in collusion to dupe us, presumably to gain illicit financial benefit for those institutions, but also to enable increasingly intrusive control over our lives. Both types are obsessed with unfettered personal freedom. They argue that climate change is an entirely natural and perpetually ongoing phenomenon, something we need not worry about or attempt to counter.

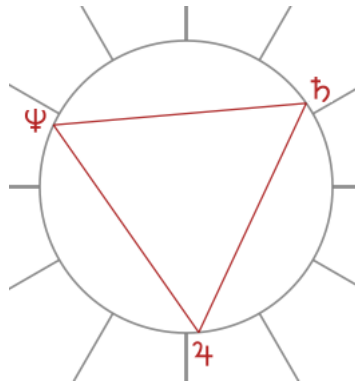
Over the past five years, these individuals and their groups have organized an effective campaign of disinformation, so that climate disruption is always challenged whenever the media refers to it, and seeds of doubt are planted and nurtured in the minds of the general population as to the reality of climate change and the urgency of our need to act collectively to diminish its causes.

Using that example (only one of thousands), events may occur in the spring of 2013 that undercut the efforts of the climate-change deniers, essentially discrediting them. I have no idea what that might be. Another natural disaster, such as Hurricane Sandy or worse might be an easy assumption, but I don't wish to imply that such an event is probable. In my view, the symbols merely speak about what is (or, in this case, what will be), not how that reality might come to pass. And—like everything else in this Uranian-Plutonian decade—surprise is more the rule than conformity to logical expectation.

Another easy example would be that Biblical-inspired "natural-history" museum in Tennessee that showcases Disneyland-like exhibitions showing men walking with dinosaurs 6,000 years ago. Complete denial and total bogosity, but I'd guess that millions of fundamentalist Christian Americans fervently believe that to be true and correct natural history.

Because of the accompanying Jupiter-Neptune square and Saturn-Neptune trine, that occur simultaneously with the trapezoid, the form of "reality acceptance" is still likely to be somewhat fantasy-based and naively optimistic and may turn out to be more wishful thinking than substantive steps forward. So, we might see reforms that are heralded as major steps toward restructuring, but which will later prove less than effective. "Clean coal" or "shale oil fields" to supply our ravenous hunger for energy would be examples of boondoggles masquerading as solutions.

Water Grand Trine



period: from June thru August 2013 (most of summer)

A Grand Trine is an equilateral triangle formed by three planets, each one of which is 120° from the other two. In geometry, this is a "perfect" triangle.

Grand Trines symbolize smooth operation that is insulated against outside influences, like a path of least resistance. They are wonderful to have during times of calm stability. During periods of turbulence or tumult, however, Grand Trines are a liability, since they're habit-based and resistant to change. Grand Trines most often form within signs of the zodiac that share a common element: Fire, Air, Earth, or Water, and indicate insularity and a certain self-absorption in action, relatedness, pragmatism, or feeling.

The particular Grand Trine will form in water signs between Jupiter (in Cancer), Saturn (in Scorpio), and Neptune (in Pisces). Another indicator of good faith about finding workable but probably idealistic solutions for the future.

The downside to this alignment is that it lobbies against change. Fantasies embraced by the culture will tend to be reinforced, at least by those who already believe them. Because we are now in a time of tumultuous, unpredictable challenges to life-as-we-know-it, the Grand Trine is unlikely to win new converts to escapist dreams. But some events may occur that will convince a certain percentage of the population that everything is just fine (or will be fine without requiring uncomfortable changes in our ways of living). For those people, the Grand Trine will be a last hurrah for clinging to outmoded beliefs.

The first two configurations (the Yod and the Trapezoid) implied that necessary change will become more apparent and more accepted in the collective (although not necessarily by the Ruling Elites, since they have a vested interest

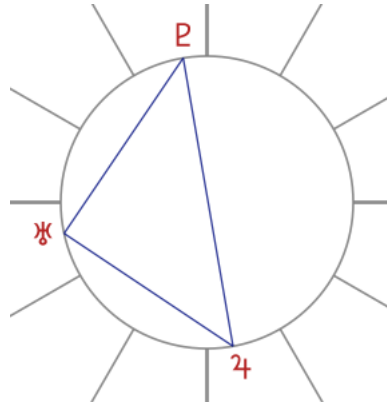
in maintaining the existing pecking order). The Grand Trine symbolizes the opposite current in the archetype flow, correlating with temporary reassurance that the life we've known can continue unchanged or that we will find solutions that allow our habitual modes to remain intact.

I've written often that throughout the 20th century, which had three decades marked by quarterly transitions of the Uranus-Pluto cycle, the most provocative and profound changes of the 1900s, the 1930s, and the 1960s did not occur during the actual alignments of Uranus and Pluto, but instead emerged fully only years later. With hindsight, we can see the seeds of tumultuous change that germinated during the alignment periods, but we couldn't imagine the fruit they would bear until it appeared much later. When the changes did finally appear, whether exciting or traumatic, the impact was still shocking, as if the changes had come out of nowhere.

I anticipate that this decade of the 2010s will adhere to that scenario of delayed timing combined with shock and surprise when change finally bursts forth as the status quo finally gives way. Although the Uranus-Pluto first-quarter square technically occurs between June 2012 and March 2015, I doubt that we'll see much during that period of almost three years that will be as shocking as what will come after, from 2016 on and into the 2020s.

For instance, in 2008, we witnessed the sudden breakdown of big investment banks. That signalled the very real and inevitable demise of the "Wild West" financial era we created (or allowed to be created) over the previous 40 years. And yet, little has changed so far. Even now, at the end of 2012, the dollar is still the world's reserve currency, the stock market continues to climb, and the bankers still enjoy what is seemingly an impregnable and untouchable syndicate of lies and thievery immensely more powerful than the Mafia ever was. Well, just wait. The Titanic may remain afloat awhile longer, but the iceberg has already gouged the ship's hull, pierced its innards, and guaranteed that the ship will eventually sink. To use another metaphor, the pre-shocks are mounting and will eventually result in a gargantuan, blow-out eruption. It will just take awhile.

Cardinal T-square



initial pass: July through September 2013 (essentially all summer)

final pass: January through June 2014 (winter and spring)

overall period: July 2013 through June 2014 (about a year)

T-squares are right triangles, having two planets opposite for the base, with a third planet at the midpoint that is mutually perpendicular to each base planet. The name comes from the resemblance to a draftsman's T-square if we "connect the dots."

T-squares are the equivalent of a box with one corner missing, or perhaps four-cornered stool with one leg missing. T-squares represent an integrated system of mutually-exclusive tensions, with each of the three relationships in the triangle being in conflict with the other two. And yet, those conflicts are inexorably bound together, producing massive pressures for release. Thus, the T-square functions as an energy intensifier.

In visual imagery, think of the T-square as if it were a bow and arrow. The bow is formed by the two opposite planets forming a base, while the planet at the apex of the triangle represents where the archer holds the arrow that's been strung and pulled back to maximum tension. That's the point of greatest stress. The "target" and release point of the pent-up energy is the missing fourth leg of the table. That's what the T-square is symbolically: a way of taking aim at a very specific bulls-eye by building tension that will then be released with great force and impact.

Unlike Grand Trines, which are smooth, harmonious, and perfectly suited to times of stability and calm, T-squares are tense, discordant, and ideal for times of challenge and provocation, since they seek the release of energy toward a specific end.

Grand trines occur in signs having the same element (fire, earth, air, water). T-squares take shape in signs of the same mode (cardinal, fixed, mutable). Cardinal T-squares are crisis-oriented and problem solving. They push conflicts to a head, so they may be resolved. Fixed T-squares are dogged and determined in maintaining a path. They are stubborn and immovable. Mutable T-squares seek

stimulation in seemingly random ways. They respond to stimulation wherever it can be found.

The most important planet in a T-square is the one at the apex, and the most important sign is the missing fourth leg (the "bull's-eye"), meaning the sign opposite the apex.

July 2013 will see the first pass of a year-long cardinal T-square with Jupiter in Cancer opposite Pluto in Capricorn to form the base, while Uranus in Aries is the apex, and Libra the "target" sign. This represents a roughly one-year period where the ongoing build-up of sporadic shocks, limited upheavals, and incidents of provocative change (Pluto in Capricorn) begin to sink in at the personal, emotional, and family levels of our collective psyche (Jupiter in Cancer). A sizable percentage of people may be jolted awake; some will probably even embrace the impetus for change, becoming active proponents of radical reform (Uranus in Aries). The key will be cooperation with others (Libra as target).

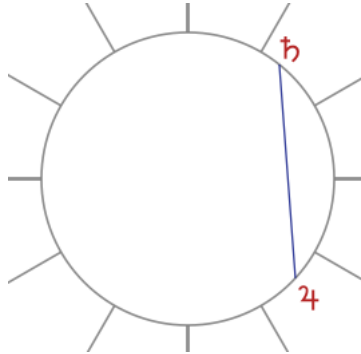
Since the T-square will coincide with the beginnings of a momentous and epochal Grand Cross in the U.S. chart between the U.S. natal Sun and Saturn aligned against transiting Uranus and Pluto, significant breakdowns might occur in the economic and financial sectors that are not merely headline newsmakers, but carry actual impact on people's daily lives in a more immediate way than in years past (although probably still in pockets rather than culture-wide; that doesn't emerge until years later).

The mounting challenges to America's status as an empire and the world's most dominant nation that have so far produced only cracks in the façade begin in 2013 to weaken the foundations of both the global economy and the political pyramid atop which America perches. More and more people will realize that the days of American Exceptionalism are numbered, and that we can no longer call the shots however we wish.

All great empires fail, and they tend to do so from the inside out, rotting from within long before they collapse overtly. The rotting is usually slow and gradual, while the eventual collapse comes with shocking suddenness, as in the case of the British Empire disintegrating after World War II or the more dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. The T-square and U.S. Grand Cross imply that the gradual "hollowing out" is likely to accelerate and deepen, even if outward collapse is still many years away.

Nor will America be alone in feeling the pre-shocks of a megaquake. By definition, the symbolism of mundane transit patterns is world-wide. China may seem like the 800-lb. gorilla and the heir apparent to the throne of world rulership, but the Chinese have sobering problems of their own. If America goes down, China may be pulled down as well. These challenges apply to all corridors of massive, concentrated power and the institutions that provide support and reap the benefits. Corporations and governments around the world are vulnerable to the profound challenges of revolt (Uranus) and upheaval (Pluto).

Jupiter in Last-Quarter Square to Saturn



initial pass: September through December 2014 (autumn)

second pass: June through September 2015 (summer)

final pass: February through July 2016 (late-winter to mid-summer)

overall period: September 2014 through early July 2016 (almost two years)

Jupiter and Saturn have a 20-year cycle in astrology. Every five years, they arrive at another quarterly transition of their shared cycle. This particular crossroads at the three-quarter point of their current cycle has the longest effective period in the four transmission shifts of the entire cycle, almost two years duration. Jupiter will be in Leo, perpendicular (square) to Saturn in Scorpio.

Jupiter symbolizes expansion, ease, permission, optimism, social opportunity, and sometimes recklessness or foolishly counting on one's luck. Saturn symbolizes constraint, slow-paced hard work, inevitable delay, and sometimes outright blockage or denial, as well as hard-won maturity and patience. The cycle has an inherently social symbolism. While the quarterly transitions may have personal implications, in civilizational astrology it's mostly about shifts in social participation through groups, based on the phase angle (which quarter) and the signs involved.

The cycle is mostly pragmatic rather than psychological or metaphysical. It's about what we can do or have to do, whether optimistically or pessimistically so.

This will be the three-quarter point in the current Jupiter-Saturn cycle. Given the astrological context during which this transit occurs (meaning the over-arching influence of the Uranus-Pluto first-quarter square), the transit signals the possibility of political, economic (meaning financial), and/or military struggles to sort out which charismatic figures might emerge to take the reins of power during a time of breakdown.

The questions that go with this transition are: Who rules? How do the rulers express their power and authority? At all levels of social organization, from

corporate hierarchies; through institutional management; to federal, state, and local governments, this involves the need to address urgent and crippling financial and economic conditions to cobble together workable solutions that allow commerce to continue in the face of significant and worsening disruptions.

International relationships are likely to be more stressful than normal, a condition which is already underway but is likely to worsen, with many contradictions between what is stated publicly and what is agreed behind closed doors. Many "arrangements" will be reconsidered in light of deteriorating conditions, and "selling" those new arrangements to resistant populations will put the propaganda machinery to the test.

We will probably also see the further and increasing development of many fractious, ad hoc movements arising within the general populace from grass-roots origins. Whether sensible or radical, these swiftly organized "viral" rebellions will lobby for change of various kinds. Most will likely be short-lived, but—like the Tea Party and Occupy movements that came and went before them—they will all play a role in the seeding process for the sweeping changes in social organization that will emerge in the latter part of the decade, from 2016 on, well into the early 2020s, which is the point at which we will see the full impact of the revolutionary death-and-rebirth symbolism of Uranus-Pluto in real life.