



PART I by Maurice Fernandez

The prophetic year of 2012 is already underway and so much is in store from an astrological point of view. A unique concentration of planetary alignments and cycles are sequencing in, and you guessed it, the weather remains stormy. Since 2010 particularly, planets rage hard and 2012 continues this trend!

In a very general way, I see that there are two important streams of influences for the year—these two streams are very different from one another, and yet, they intertwine and influence us with equal might and intensity, taking us to opposite extremes. It can be very confusing and disorienting to navigate these conflicting currents, so describing their specific qualities is in order.

The first stream: Crossing new frontiers blindfolded

The first combination of influences describes a strong pull to free ourselves from anything in our lives that is not authentic. It calls for simplifying our lives and stripping layers, whether on a material or psychological level. Living more authentically and simplicity reconnects us with fundamental values often lost in our course of development—as we become better educated and more sophisticated, many of us lose touch with the real reasons and meanings in life—this cycle is about going back to the origins and freeing our spirit from superfluous entanglements. Accordingly, attitudes, associations, mind clutter, attic clutter or anything that prevents us from a more authentic life is subject to be dissolved—bare and disarmed, we can stop pretending and be our true selves. Letting go is easier said than done, but in the current social and political unstable climate, it may become survival necessity. I speak about regaining freedom of spirit, but in fact many of us will realize the value of simplicity from necessity. Beyond 2012, the coming years suggest the world will face food and water crises that will make each of us thankful for our daily meals—it is back to the basics. When I speak of freedom in this context, I imagine reconnecting to our original identity, the natural self.

Astrologically, this trend first gains momentum with the movement of the planet **Neptune into the sign of Pisces on February 3rd**. Another step in this direction is taken between **the end of May and June 21st**, when a series of eclipses (including a **rare Venus occultation**) accompany **Jupiter moving into the sign of Gemini**. Neptune in Pisces and Jupiter in Gemini will lock on one another—their combined influence blows all boundaries and inspire a tremendous need to open up to completely new horizons—it is a time when we grow actual wings and explore completely new potential and dimensions, whether this takes the form of an actual journey, or gaining new vision for our lives, or simply starting new ventures. Anything holding us back that is not in line with this expansive energy, whether it is the security of a job, fear, or obligations, is likely to generate tremendous frustration—the arising need to shed the skin, or even transcend our own physical body, is similar to the urge to free a wild animal from his or her cage. It is a time to dare freedom!

Exploring vast potentials takes us forward, but as mentioned earlier, it also reconnects us with our origins—the simpler and timeless meanings of life. We grow these wings when we realize how much we can really do and how much burden we have accrued by unnecessarily complicating our lives. Notwithstanding, as much as freedom is appealing, it is usually more challenging than we expect. When we hear the freedom bells of February and June, the inspiration for release may take the form of manic episodes that are not truly

integrated—rushing forward onto open landscapes, we can find ourselves lost in the vastness. Are we really ready to relinquish old patterns without fully knowing what comes next? Obviously there is excitement in the prospect of freedom, and we may experience an emotional high; yet, if these new adventures are mere whims without true content, or if we are resisting the changes that must come with freedom, a crash can follow. It takes courage and trust to sail open seas with a sense of peace. Finding peace depends on accepting we are not in full control of what comes next—we know we need to sail, but have no clues about the final destination. The influence of Neptune in Pisces at its core overrides our control centers—it neutralizes our mind. When we are not in control and rely on the sea currents to navigate our way, our choices are to panic or to trust. Such trust is found only when we are authentic—then we know it feels right. At its best, these influences will connect us with the elements—we will tune into the subtle message that the wind reverts back to us, and listen without prejudice.

The release of control can be a freeing experience on its own, but these cycles suggest humanity may at times have to learn the hard way—expectations or plans are subject to be deviated by circumstances—it is important to proceed in a gradual way and be ready to improvise. Neptune in Pisces represents the *wild natural elements, oceans, ice and sand deserts, crude resources, and water in general*. On the other front, Jupiter in Gemini represents *winds and the access to foreign dimensions*. As a result, with the combination of both, we can expect natural events to further accelerate in intensity particularly when involving oceans, food crops, water, or oil. Catastrophes may take the form of new diseases affecting the immune system that spread quickly, perhaps through waterways. But on a more positive note, I suspect, there will be an enhancement of inter-species or inter-dimensional communication...humans crossing new outer-space frontiers and making completely new discoveries, or breakthrough in understanding animal and vegetal consciousness...who knows what or whom awaits us as we step into virginal dimensions...

The Second Stream: Force for a Battlefield

The second combination of influences describes more aggressive energy. We live in times of rampant insecurity and uncertainty. Systems once perceived reliable are now floundering, and many of us are transformed into social or political activists cheering solutions and pointing fingers in attempt to foster the change we feel is needed. Waves of protests have swept nations and continue to confront the status quo, while on the natural front, tsunamis and other disasters have devastated entire regions with consequences across the planet. We live in times of purging, where systems are deconstructed and leave a vacuum. We are edgy and agitated because we know things must change, and this second stream of planetary influence adds fuel to this fire. In fact, this year sees an increase of radical destruction combined with confrontational and defensive stances. This bursting energy needs an outlet—and at worst, there will be war. But if creative outlets are forged, amazing breakthroughs and social revolutions can win the day. But what remains certain in either case, no rest is in sight.

The planets **Pluto and Uranus** are progressing to form a square to one another in the political signs of Capricorn and Aries. These two bodies were last together in 1966, right along the time when social revolutions spurred across the globe as well. These energies bring tremendous progress and radical shift ultimately, but their path leaves nothing standing. They come together **in June**—right along the time when the first stream of influences is also in full force! Pluto and Uranus come together again in **October 2012**, breaking away and colliding back onto one another this way **all the way through 2014**. On another front, the planet **Mars** is making very “daring” moves as well—Mars is a planet that represents activism and defensive action. After

being in a retrograde motion from **January 23, to April 3rd**, Mars turns direct and releases tremendous tension accumulated during the retrograde period. This release can generate both breakthroughs and violence when it takes place **in the course of April**. Later on, around **July 19, Mars will join the above pair, Uranus and Pluto** to form a triangle. Such meeting of forces will undoubtedly bring tremor and intensity—people may feel this influence by breaking away from engagement, leaving their job, relocating, changing plans, or being high on the defensive—in positive ways, new pathways will be created as a result of the converging of forces. Around **August 16, Mars meets the planet Saturn**—this combination is highly militaristic, and as if it wasn't charged enough, the configurations lands in the most cardinal point in **Israel and Netanyahu's** astrology chart! At large, most affected will be the signs of *Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorns*. The tension does not dissipate as Mars generates another climax on **October 2nd**, again releasing confrontational energy (right as Pluto and Uranus repeat their own dance). Days after that, in time for the US elections, the planet **Saturn moves into the sign of Scorpio**—a placement prompted to bring more political intensity and a climate of controversy. This ingress (October-November) will be a bitter pill for Iranian president Achmadinejad, for North Korean new leader Kim Jong-un, and for ailing Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez... phew...

Keep going

We are braving powerful forces—this means we can go very far, but which direction is left to be seen. We have seen in the past year, as regimes were toppled, that there is a lot a single individual can do—no one should feel powerless. The first stream of influence brings tremendous inspiration, a call for freedom, courage to sail open seas—I'm very poetic about it because it is like a song from the stars. The second stream is a rage of titans: it inspires radical action in ways that brings destruction to one degree or another. Both streams of influence are about change, but in very different ways...the first is about letting go and moving forward blindfolded and trusting, the second calls for action and force, wearing an armor to forge a way through solid concrete (resistance).

Stepping forward wisely requires first that we accept the challenge and embody courage. Some of us will be more involved than others, but we are all part of this journey. A great deal of physical and psychic energy is needed to navigate these strong waters, and so we must proceed with care with the use of our resources. For example, it is important to try diffuse unnecessary drama or conflict. Acting selfishly and reactively will deplete us fast. The battles we choose and the pathways we create must serve collective betterment. Keeping a light spirit and humor in the midst of intensity is also good medicine; whether we attain new spiritual heights or face tenacious existential struggles, we must remember not take ourselves too seriously.

Walk on! We shall meet on these sacred paths...

I will discuss planetary influences occurring between October and December 2012 (particularly the interesting events for December 21st, 2012) in Part II—to be published late summer.

Visit these links for more insights on this year's events:

<http://www.mauricefernandez.com/TMAneptuneinpisces.pdf>

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