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Lords of the “Ring” Cycle  
Uranus-Pluto and the Struggle for Balance Between the People and Their Leaders  
by Terry Lamb

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In the Lord of the Rings trilogy, a great battle between light and dark is waged time and again as the various humanoid species of Middle Earth learn to manage individual versus collective power. In modern human affairs, this conflict can be observed through, among other cycles, the interaction of Uranus and Pluto. On June 24, 2012, Uranus and Pluto will reach 8° of Aries and Capricorn, squaring each other for the first of seven times. The remaining six contacts will occur between 6° and 15° of these signs, the last of which occurs on March 16, 2015. This promises to be one of the most pivotal planetary contacts of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, one that will challenge us all to do better at being human and at being ourselves. It will also require nations and their peoples to overcome their petty differences and cooperate — or catastrophically self-destruct.

Uranus and Pluto conjoin each other, beginning a new cycle, roughly every 111 or 141 years depending on the speed of Pluto. Each new cycle spawns growth that is signified by the processes associated with Uranus and Pluto, as well as the sign they are in. Uranus represents sudden change and abrupt upheaval — events that awaken us from our slumber, whether individual or collective. Earthquakes and plane crashes are generally Uranian events. Uranus is also associated with the drive for individual freedom and equality as well as rebellions against the status quo. Pluto symbolizes deep unconscious urges which well up periodically as impetuses stirring the masses of humanity into action, such as the genocide of WWII or the 9/11 attacks. Pluto can also suggest hidden, insidious influences such as organized crime, terrorist networks, or nuclear radiation. To use an apt analogy, their conjunction can be likened to a tinder keg sitting on an atom bomb. While in our personal lives we can work with planetary energies to effect positive change, on a collective level the results range over the entire spectrum of possibilities, from miraculous rescues to huge catastrophes.

To help us understand the nature of this planetary interaction in real life, we can look at past Uranus-Pluto contacts. They conjoined in 1710, 1850–1, and 1965–6. In 1710, Western imperialism was at its height. The most powerful nations of Europe were jockeying for supremacy on the European continent. Meanwhile, England was consolidating its maritime empire, gaining land in North America and India. In 1850, the great abolition debate was occurring in the U.S., and the balance of power was established using slavery as a bargaining chip. In 1848, revolutions in India, Paris, Vienna, Venice, Berlin, Milan, and Rome signaled that the conjunction was in orb.

The last time Uranus and Pluto tangled was in the 1960s. At that time, they conjoined at 17° Virgo in 1965–66, and a revolution in human rights was born. Some clock its genesis from the Kennedy assassination on November 22, 1963. It can also be associated with the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King in 1968, and it gave “power to the people” as groups gathered to battle for civil, women’s, American Indian, immigrant, and gay rights; the young and daring cried out for peace instead of war in Vietnam. Events at the beginning of a cycle presage its nature as it unfolds and suggests a theme that is further explored

throughout its duration. These issues take on critical mass every time 1/8 of its cycle is completed (about every 15–20 years depending on the speed of Pluto), and adjustments are made in response. For this cycle, the process was highlighted in 1986–7, and it will be again in 2012–15 as Uranus makes its first (opening or waxing) square to Pluto within this cycle. This promises to be a challenging time which will be a turning point in human culture and its political structures.

### The Three Themes of This Cycle

I have identified three themes which I expect will be played out during this cycle: the management of explosive force, people's rights and equality, and the viability of government by the people. The first is a theme associated with these planets on their own, irrespective of their sign location. The development of explosives and their use as a force by which to overpower others follows Uranus-Pluto cycles over the last thousand years. The second and third represent a manifestation of these planets in the sign of Virgo. Virgo is, among other things, the sign of the worker — the common (working) person — and of women as independent, self-determining individuals rather than chattel or care givers. Uranus in Virgo foments the assertion of rights by or on behalf of the common person individually and collectively, regardless of any other qualities they may have — even if they are female, gay, black, or classified according to any other social or racial stratum. Pluto represents power and its use, and when it conjoins Uranus, it hands power over to whoever is elevated under Uranus's stimulus.

### The Management of Explosive Force

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, humanity realized the ability to completely destroy the planet and its inhabitants. There were two ways in which this could be accomplished: ecological destruction and nuclear emission. The first atomic bomb was constructed soon after Pluto was discovered, in 1937, and Pluto was prominent in the charts for its first detonation and subsequent use. Although Pluto rules nuclear power itself, the capacity for global destruction is the domain of Uranus-Pluto. This is evident in what has happened with nuclear power and its use as this current cycle of these planets began in the 1960s. By the time the Cuban Missile Crisis, on October 22–28, 1962, brought the world to the brink of all-out nuclear war, Uranus and Pluto were already in orb of their conjunction.

This led to the realization that nuclear war was a non-possibility if the earth and its inhabitants were to survive, and the forces of rational thought prevailed as a series of treaties and agreements began to be put into place. Although the first (START I) was agreed to in 1972, efforts to reach detente began in the mid-Sixties. The first “hard”, non-preliminary treaties were signed in 1987–88 (the INF Treaties, limiting short- and medium-range missiles, signed by Reagan and Gorbachev), the 1/8 point in the current Uranus-Pluto cycle.

### Individual Rights and Equality

The theme of individual rights was prominent when Uranus and Pluto conjoined in 1850 in Aries, as an unresolved disagreement over slavery flared between northern and southern states. When the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787, it was only possible because these two factions agreed to disagree, deciding that slave trade could not be abolished before 1808 and adding the “three-fifths compromise” to sweeten the deal for the South. In 1850, the deadline was long past, and the debate heated up in the twenty years prior to the conjunction. The rest of that cycle,

viewed from a sociological perspective, can be seen as a push for full human rights for slaves and their descendants. This was not fully and finally accomplished, however, as a legal right until the advent of the current cycle, with the signing of a series of civil rights acts by Lyndon Johnson starting in 1964. Now, even after the laws have been enacted, further adjustments are still needed to bring true equality to peoples of non-white races and non-Western cultures.

The struggle for women's rights began with the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848, also coinciding with the previous Uranus-Pluto conjunction. Suffrage was granted to women in 1919, when Uranus and Pluto harmoniously trined each other. In the Sixties, the women's movement sought two areas of freedom: the freedom to choose whether or not to create life, which came through convenient and reliable birth control as well as the right to abortion, and the freedom to enjoy all the freedoms (and burdens) that men enjoy, from equal pay for equal work to equal property rights. The Equal Rights Amendment was spawned as a result, but it failed to be ratified by 2/3 of the states in the required 10 years after it was passed by Congress in 1972.

Gay rights reached public awareness with the Stonewall riots in Greenwich Village on June 27, 1969, but the movement began in the mid-Sixties on the same wave of optimism and unrest that spawned the other movements. Gay and lesbian groups are still politically active in trying to bring about true equality on a par with those in the heterosexual community, where recently some progress has been made through legislation and court action, as well as public opinion.

The movement for Indian (Native American) Rights also brought more equality to those of American Indian descent. The American Indian Movement (AIM) formed in 1968 to support sovereign rights for Native Nations and their peoples. Immigrant rights were also highlighted, as Cesar Chavez spearheaded the movement which gave birth to the United Farm Workers (UFW), leading a five-year strike which began in 1965 and going on a fast in 1968 to increase public awareness. Gains have been made in both areas in the ensuing decades.

### The Viability of Government By the People

Related to individual rights and equality is the notion of government by the people. Even though this is the supposed value system of the United States, it has only ever marginally been the case. The founding fathers wrote the Constitution based on representative, rather than direct, democracy, for they felt that the people needed to be guided by those wiser and more educated than the huddled masses. The trouble has been, however, the question of whom the representatives really represent. Since the beginning of our democracy, because of our wedding with a capitalist economic system, business has always played a major role in government. A new vision of our government which placed a higher premium on individual rights was born on the wave of rising consciousness related to the humanistic ideals of freedom and self-governance.

We could say that the Uranus-Pluto cycle which began in 1850 was in part about the eradication of slavery in the United States. By the time the cycle ended, with the new cycle that began in the 1960s, complete freedom and equality for slaves' descendants had still not been achieved. What had been an issue of individual rights, with the Uranus-Pluto in Aries in 1850, became an issue of group rights once they conjoined in Virgo, where the group(s) were the working classes (which frequently are the same as racial and ethnic minorities) that powered the agricultural and industrial might of the nation.

When in 1964 President Johnson signed the first Civil Rights Act, he acknowledged that

there would be an inevitable backlash, saying that two things would happen: he would lose in 1968, and the Democrats would lose the South. He was right: Giving equal rights to all people spawned a socio-political struggle that is frequently dated from the vitriol that arose during the Johnson-Goldwater presidential campaign of 1964. In fact, however, it may have dated from John F. Kennedy's assassination, which according to New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison and others was a coup during which our government by the people and for the people was stolen by business and government forces that opposed full equal rights for all (because they feared losing control). They were (and still are) generally opposed to popular self-governance—or the population having much real say in government at all.

### History Since the 1960s

Much of the political history of the U.S. as well as in the rest of the world can be depicted as a story which follows these themes. On the most obvious level, an inexorable march toward the worldwide eradication of slavery has been taking place. The most important step of this tremendous accomplishment occurred with the general recognition that slavery is not an acceptable practice. This has been occurring gradually since 1850, until now it is a standard that is held as a universal measurement of civilized behavior and is encoded in international law, even if the law is still frequently broken.

On more subtle levels, the rights of other groups have also been more strongly asserted—even to the extreme as more and more ethnic groups have attempted to claim a patch of earth of themselves and start their own government, whether it be the Israelis, Palestinians, Kurds, Bosnian Serbs, or Chechens. Larger countries which were unions of disparate peoples (often so comprised because of past subjugation) have been shattering into smaller units, from the U.S.S.R. to Yugoslavia to the Congo.

Events have followed the pattern to be expected as a result of the unfolding, or waxing, stage of this cycle. At the time of the conjunction, there's a "big bang", when great insights inspire leaders and thinkers, and the population responds in its own way through fads, fashion trends, creative expression, and social movements. During the first quarter of its development, we see the efflorescence of these impulses. Examples include: exposing corruption in government (Watergate); the development and implementation of social programs and the welfare system; the flourishing of the U.N. as the arbiter of international disputes; the development of international law; the negotiation of anti-nuclear treaties and agreements. This is especially evident in the events that occurred at the sextile (when Uranus is 60° beyond Pluto). For this cycle, it occurred from 1993–98, when the ideals of the 60s were partially expressed through the Clinton Administration and its ideologies. Even during these relatively benign times, however, the pendulum swung between the new wave of social and individual empowerment and the old status quo. We can see this in the changes of power between the political parties in the U.S. and U.K. since 1966.

### The Coming Uranus-Pluto Square

One-fourth of the way through the cycle (at the square, or 90°), we experience a more powerful, even shocking reaction to the ideals which typify this cycle, then an adjustment to the reaction. This is true in any cycle. Since these planets are known for their volatility, the square is likely to be quite markedly noticeable in the form of shocking events. These events will begin to occur as soon as the planets are "within range" of each other, so that we begin to feel both their

energies at about the same time. Because of the explosive power of Uranus and Pluto in combination and because of the way they are combining, we have already begun to feel the effects of the square.

The way it works is this: Uranus moves faster than Pluto. Pluto has been in Sagittarius since 1995, Uranus in Aquarius (forming the sextile) in 1995–2003. Once Uranus entered Pisces, even though it is not in orb of the square to Pluto, the fast-moving planets (the Moon, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars) carry the energy of Uranus forward to Pluto. They will first aspect Uranus, then, even as quickly as hours later, make the same aspect to Pluto, enacting a process called *translation of light*. This means that we have been feeling the rumblings of this aspect since 2003, especially in the summer-fall of 2003, when Mars in Pisces retrograded (moved backward) while it was carrying the energy of Uranus to Pluto. This created a “window on the future” from March 17<sup>th</sup> through November 27<sup>th</sup>.

It has been experienced again many times since, but in particular we feel/felt it in 2007 — especially in the fall — as Jupiter once again carried energy from Uranus to Pluto.

During this time, the entirety of Uranus’s transit through Pisces was experienced in encapsulated form, including the impending square to Pluto. What is unique about this square is that, although we will understand it for seven years through the mutable (integrating) signs of Pisces and Sagittarius, it will actually occur in Aries and Capricorn — cardinal (activating) signs. This means that the “lesson” will change once the planets enter the cardinal signs, which Pluto does in 2008–9 and Uranus in 2011.

### The Themes Revisited

The themes that were defined in the 1960s will be revisited during the square. We have already seen that borne out, as the issues of the past few years spark the coining of new terms that belie Uranus-Pluto’s fingers in the pie: WMDs (weapons of mass destruction), partial-birth abortion (late-term abortion redefined as taking a life), neocon (neo-conservative). Because the U.S. and its actions are so critical to the outcome of any astrological influence, we can use what has happened in the U.S. as representative of larger patterns. We can look through the 2003 window on the future to get a picture of the issues we will have to resolve during the coming square. Over those months, we observed:

- the U.S. invasion of Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power because of purported existence of weapons of mass destruction in violation of U.N. sanctions. This involved the implementation of the neo-conservative policy of circumventing the U.N., which organization the Pentagon neocons consider obsolete. (Themes 1 and 3 )
- multiple terrorist attacks on “soft targets” — those outside the targeted nations and focusing on civilians. (Themes 1 and 2)
- passage of a bill to ban late-term abortion. (Theme 2)
- record deficits in the U.S. budgets, created against the desires of the aware public (partially due to the unilateral action in Iraq), an increase in unfunded mandates to the states, and resulting near-bankruptcy of many state budgets. (Theme 3)
- the effectiveness of the “no child left behind” educational initiative is brought under fire because it does nothing to support increased educational opportunity for those in with the lowest achievement levels (racial minorities and others of the lowest socio-economic sectors). (Theme 2)
- the failure of welfare-to-work programs to bring people, mostly single mothers, out of

- poverty — rather creating a new underclass of the poor with even less ability to rise above their circumstances than before. (Theme 2)
- the outing of CIA NOC (non-official cover) operative Valerie Plame by unnamed Bush Administration officials to retaliate for husband Ambassador Joseph Wilson’s divulgence of the truth about intelligence reports falsely used to justify the Iraq War. This leak was a federal offense which may go uninvestigated and unpunished. (Theme 3)
  - the lies, half-truths, and omissions of the Bush Administration, especially vis-a-vis the justification for the Iraq War, contested. (Themes 1 and 3)
  - the battle over the release of information under the Freedom of Information Act, particularly focused on Vice President Cheney’s energy summit meeting early in the Bush presidency. (Theme 3)
  - the curtailment of rights under the Patriot I Act. (Themes 2 and 3)
  - the battle in the U.S. Senate over the appointment of judges to the District of Columbia Federal Circuit Court with a far-right agenda (which lies outside the American mainstream). (Themes 2 and 3)
  - the wholesale redistricting of U.S. voting districts, masterminded by Bush Advisor Karl Rove, to benefit Republican candidates, most draconically implemented in Texas (dubbed “Perrymandering” after Texas Governor Perry). (Themes 2 and 3)
  - Environmental regulation has been rolled back under such initiatives as the “Clear Skies” Act, which permits more air pollution than previously, and executive orders which permit, amongst others, the logging of good (as opposed to down or dead) timber in previously protected National Forests.
  - “power to the people” reborn through web-based activism and free-speech blogs (Theme 2)
  - the persistent power grab by the Bush Administration and the successful effort to roll back advances in social equality (Theme 2)
  - the stacking of the courts with judges with a right-wing agenda (Theme 2)
  - the abuse of the Department of Justice for political gain (Theme 3)
  - the abuse of the voting system to maintain power illegally (Themes 2 and 3)
  - the consolidation of media control and the loss of the people’s voice (Theme 2)

As you can see, these issues carry one or more of the themes defined during the 60s, often being overtly related to freedoms gained (or only fought for) during those years. There is a thread in each of these events which will be played out over the next twelve years of the square’s influence.

Generally, we can see a struggle between what is defined in U.S. government as a struggle between left and right. After the social liberalization policies of the Kennedy years were allowed to prevail, fulfilling the reformist, egalitarian forces of the this planetary cycle. Then there was a backlash which grew increasingly extreme over the last thirty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century beginning with the Nixon Administration (although his presidency is now considered relatively liberal by current right-wing standards). This has reached its greatest extreme (so far) in the George W. Bush Administration, which governs from the far right. This retaliation was punctuated by pendulum swings toward the center and center-left during the Carter and Clinton Administrations.

## The Coming Crises

Several issues will reach critical mass as the Uranus-Pluto square comes into sharper focus over the next nine years. The pendulum will continue to swing between healthy and unhealthy forces for change, depicted as a struggle between left and right, but it is really a struggle for balance between people and their leaders. The planets will reveal the timing of this flux and flow — not just Uranus-Pluto, which defines the Ring Cycle, but the other players as well — Neptune which dissolves old patterns, Saturn which hardens and limits so we can see the flaws, Jupiter which gives us the hope to carry on. The critical issues are:

- dealing with weapons of mass destruction, from nuclear warheads to bio- and chemical weapons.
- creating a flexible but unified international vision of how government, nature, and populations should interact.
- understanding the need for and creating the means for the upliftment of the world's under classes.

Only in these ways can the earth continue to survive and support the life that exists on it now.

Critical to this is the movement and evolution of society, which ultimately drives (or fails to drive) political change. The current key is the Pluto-in-Sagittarius theme of education of the masses, and the American masses are not getting educated to *think*, in the critical sense of the word, for themselves, to question and to derive independent opinions based on their own assessment of the facts. Right now, in the United States, the population is under-educated as our system of instruction moves toward quantifiable “fact-based” education away from an education that teaches qualitative evaluation and the ability to conceptualize. This is the ultimate undermining of “power to the people”, for an uneducated population cannot direct a government “by the people” wisely.

## Uranus-Pluto in the Cardinal Signs

However, when Uranus and Pluto finally make their exact aspect, they do so from Aries and Capricorn (respectively). This will change the tone of what we must accomplish, and we will have to figure it out on the fly, since the contact will already be working at the time that the sign change occurs. Pluto's last transit of Capricorn was in 1762–78. At that time, a major transformation (Pluto) of the status quo (Capricorn) was afoot, as the United States was conceived and the American Revolution fulfilled. Uranus in Aries suggests the assertion of individual rights, as it did in 1850, so surely those supporting individual rights will once again clash with those supporting a powerful central government, and a new balance will be struck as this dance is played out. The cardinal signs add a stronger action-orientation, often expressed in war and violence.

For more than 200 years, the United States has led the way in issues of human rights: As it goes, so goes the world. The test of the Uranus-Pluto square for the U.S. (and thereafter the rest of the world) is whether its people can arouse itself from its hedonistic, pleasure-saturated, materialism-drugged sleep to see what's wrong and correct the nation's course before the balances of nature and of political power are thrown too far off center to be recovered. The result will be a collapse of the country as international standard-bearer, allowing another nation to assume the mantle of world leader. The fate of the world will then depend on the wisdom of another civilization and how well it is able to carry out its vision of how government, people, and nature should interact.

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