

AMERICA AT THE CROSSROADS: WILL IT PERISH, SURVIVE, OR TRANSFORM?

(This is a modified version of a presentation given at the ISAR 2014 conference, September 27, 2014, in Phoenix, AZ)

America is in trouble.

It is in danger of losing its identity, and perhaps many of its treasured liberties, based on over 200 years of being the most exceptional experiment in democracy and capitalism the world has ever known.

Most Americans know this. Russia and China know this. In fact, the entire world is aware of the threat to America's identity and standing in the world, except perhaps the political leaders of America and many of their supporters, who apparently believe two contradictory narratives.

1. On one hand, the Administration states that America is not in decline or in danger, that it is strong and is still the greatest country in the world.
2. On the other hand, many supporters of President Obama, and possibly Obama himself, believe that the democracy and capitalism as practiced in the USA has not been an exceptional experiment at all in world history, but rather a *failed* practice that has been merely an excuse for the exploitation and oppression of others, both in America and abroad. For this viewpoint, Obama has apologized to the world for America's perceived sins.

This later belief is based on three ideas, as outlined by Dinesh D'Souza in his book and movie, "America: Imagine a World Without Her,"¹ in which he states:

The critique builds upon a single idea: theft... (that)

- 1) America was *founded* in an original act of piracy: the early settlers came from abroad and stole the country from native Indians
- 2) Then America was *built* on theft: white Americans stole the labor of African Americans by enslaving them for 250 years
- 3) The borders of America were *extended* by theft: America stole half of Mexico in the Mexican-American War

Moreover, America's economic system - *capitalism* - is also based upon theft since it confers unjust profits on a few and deprives the majority of workers their 'fair share.' Hence the popular political notion today of "income inequality," as the greatest threat confronting the future of America - especially to middle class America.

Finally, America's *foreign policy is based upon theft*. "Why are we in the Middle East? Clearly, it is because of oil. America's actions abroad are aimed at plundering other people's lands and resources so that we can continue to enjoy an outsized standard of living compared to the rest of the world," writes D'Souza.

This polarity of pervasive and growing beliefs between the “exceptional and compassionate America” versus the “Evil, plundering, and oppressive America,” has reached a critical boiling point in the American psyche as well as in its political reality. It is ripping America apart at its core.

America, as we know it, is in danger. These are not “ordinary times,” as astrologers so clearly understand and many so clearly forecasted, before it started coming apart in the 21st century.

Direction of Country

Obama Job Approval | Congressional Job Approval | Approval of Health Care Law

Polling Data					
Poll	Date	Sample	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Spread
RCP Average	8/4 - 9/7	--	27.0	65.2	-38.2
ABC News/Wash Post	9/4 - 9/7	RV	31	66	-35
The Economist/YouGov	8/30 - 9/1	729 RV	25	63	-38
Rasmussen Reports	8/25 - 8/31	3500 LV	25	66	-41
GWU/Battleground	8/23 - 8/28	1000 LV	21	70	-49
Reason-Rupe/PSRAI	8/6 - 8/10	1000 A	33	60	-27
McClatchy/Marist	8/4 - 8/7	806 RV	27	66	-39

All Direction of Country Polling Data



As shown on the table above, according to “RealClearPolitics.com,” over 65% of Americans today believe the country is going in the wrong direction, while just 27% think it is going in the right direction, as of September 9, 2014.²

The September 7, 2014, Washington Post/ABC survey found that only 38% of Americans believe President Barack Obama has done more to unite the country, whereas 55% believe he has done more to divide it.

Poll after poll reports that Americans do not believe the country is safer that it was prior to 9/11. According to a recent NBC/WSJ poll of September 10, “*The percentage of Americans who believe the United States is less safe is at its highest point since the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.*”

How can this be? Even after 5 years of economic growth, new all-time highs in its stock market, two- + years of decent jobs gains, and the President's insistence on multiple occasions that “*The War on Terror is over,*”³ Americans are less satisfied with its leadership and the direction its country is headed in, and feel less safe and respected as a nation, than one would reasonably expect.

Arguably, the country is more divided along ideologically political lines than ever before, as easily observed by the dysfunctional relationship between Congress and the Executive branch, or the White House and the lawmakers.

As baffling as this must seem to most people, the critical state of affairs that threatens the very survival of the United States is not - and should not be - a surprise to Mundane Astrologers. To them, the current state of disarray and polarization, combined with the threat of survival, is clearly evident.

ASTROLOGY

As astrologers, our job is to understand the correspondence between movements in the heavens and activities upon earth. After all, the study of astrology is essentially the correlation between cycles in the cosmos and cycles in human activities.

So what cycles are happening right now that reflect the depressive state of affairs in the USA?

To answer that question, we need only to look at today's transits of Uranus and Pluto, in relationship to the planetary positions at the time the USA was born. It is also insightful to look at the transits of today's planets to the chart of President Barack Obama. We can do more, but really, it's all there in these two charts and their transits and progressions. Furthermore, an analysis of these charts will allow us to intelligently speculate on the future of the USA: Will it Survive, Perish, or Transform?

In presenting this material, I am certain I will touch upon subjects that may be very uncomfortable for many, regardless of whether you are a conservative who despises the actions of President Obama, or a liberal who despised the actions of George W. Bush, the prior President.

After all, in a recent survey by Quinnipiac University on "Who has been the worst USA President since World War II," 33 percent of respondents said Barack Obama, and 28% said George W. Bush, our two 21st century leaders.⁴ The only other president ranked in double digits was Richard Nixon, way down at 11%. Nixon, as you may recall, resigned in disgrace after the Watergate scandal in the early 1970's. Our latest two presidents are approximately three times more unpopular than Nixon.

Americans are clearly angry and divided over the perceived failed leadership of its current and former presidents. This goes hand in hand with the reality that today, America - as we know her - is in danger. Her survival is at risk. And this shows up extremely well via the principles of classic modern-day astrology.

BASIC ASTROLOGY

Let's begin by asking key questions about how astrology works, as it pertains to this discussion.

If our question is: "Will America Survive, Perish, or Transform," we need to consider what planet rules these terms? What rules "survival?" That would be Pluto and the Sun.

What rules the concept of “Perish,” or “Termination,” death, or endings? That would be Pluto. What rules transformation? That too would be Pluto.

Now, let's consider: what rules the life force of an entity? That would be the Sun.

What planet signifies the leader of the country or corporation or enterprise? Once again, the Sun is the leader of any group.

In a country's chart, what rules the government as an entity? That is Saturn.

What rules the law and the lawmakers of a country? Saturn.

When the Sun and Saturn are in a hard aspect, do you expect the relationship between the president and lawmakers (or Congress) to be easy or challenging? It indicates the relationship will be hard.

And what do you expect when Pluto, by transit, makes a hard aspect to an already existing hard aspect between a nation's Sun and Saturn? A major crisis between the executive and legislative (lawmaking) branches of that country's government.

Welcome to the USA, 2008-2015, where one peak of the geocosmic crisis in underway in 2013-2015. And there will be others to follow shortly after.

THE NATAL CHART OF THE USA AND CURRENT TRANSITS

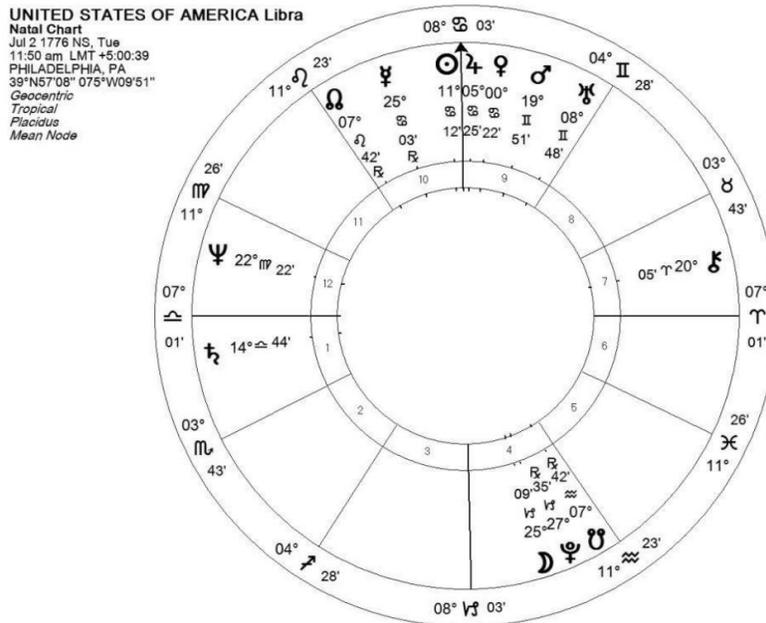
Our task begins with a look at the birth chart of the USA. That, however, is not an easy task, for there is great debate not only about the time the USA was officially “born,” but even the date that is valid.

Most people believe the United States was “born” on July 4, 1776. That is the day that General George Washington was notified of Congress' vote for Independence. It was the time that the American Revolutionary War began.⁵

The vote for the Declaration of Independence, however, was completed on July 2, 1776, according to David McCullough, historian and author of the book “1776.” The exact time of the vote is not known. However, according to astrologer Gary Noel, in a discussion for the ISAR e-zine (<https://isar2020.org/>), it is likely that the vote took place before noon, because the vote was announced in the evening newspapers. In order to make the evening edition of the daily news, articles needed to be submitted before noon. A vote before noon on July 2 would give a chart with Virgo or Libra rising, instead of the Sagittarius rising that many astrologers use, including myself previously.

The most important document leading to the creation of the United States of America and its vote for independence was the Declaration of Independence. Right in the beginning, this document states “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.*” Throughout the document, it highlights the importance of equality and the right of all people to pursue liberty, justice, and happiness. Therefore, I am inclined to agree with Noel, that the vote took place before noon. If so, the USA would have a Virgo or Libra rising. I now believe it would be Libra rising, for Libra rules this concept of “equality” and “justice for all.”

Hence the chart I now prefer for rendering an astrological appraisal of the United States is for July 2, 1776, 11:50 AM, with Libra rising, as shown here.

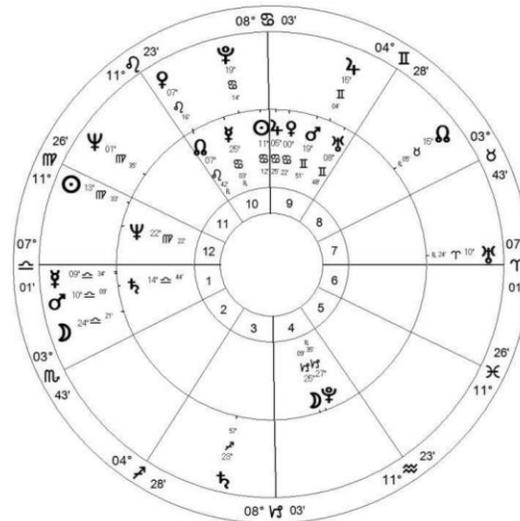


Regardless of whether you prefer July 2 or July 4 as the founding date of the USA, the Uranus-Pluto waxing square is in the midst of forming a grand square to the USA natal Sun-Saturn square at 11-15° of Cancer-Libra. In both charts, the aspect is powerfully operative 2013-2015, and the consequences of decisions made during this time will carry on for several years afterwards. It is the most enduring and arguably “the most dangerous” aspect of a generation. It began in June 2012, and really “hit” the USA chart in exactness in March 2013. That is when Americans began seriously losing their faith in the trustworthiness of their government due to a series of scandals that began to break out, such as Benghazi, IRS, NSA, the Affordable Health Care Act (aka ObamaCare), the Veterans Administration (VA) hospital care for veterans, the trade of five Taliban terrorist suspects for one USA Army sergeant who was alleged to be a deserter, etc. The waxing square of Uranus to Pluto will continue into March 2015, but Pluto and Uranus will continue to aspect the USA Sun-Saturn square even beyond that. In fact, Pluto does not leave 15° Capricorn until December 2016. That alone should alert one to the idea that this threat to America will continue until the 2016 USA elections are over.

So our task is to consider the possibilities. What, for instance, is the nature of transiting Pluto in a T-square to a country's natal Sun-Saturn square? What is the nature of a transiting Uranus in a T-square to a natal Sun-Saturn square in a national chart? What is the probability of both happening at the same time? It is not very great. The last

time something even remotely close occurred was in early September 1929, the week that the stock market made its all-time high before beginning the greatest stock market crash in history.

Inner Wheel
United States of America
 Natal Chart
 Jul 2 1776 NS, Tue
 11:50 am LMT +5:00:39
 Philadelphia, PA
 39°N57'08" 075°W09'51"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 Mean Node



Outer Wheel
Stock Market Crash
 Natal Chart
 Sep 6 1929, Fri
 12:00 pm EDT +4:00
 New York, NY
 40°N42'51" 074°W00'23"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 Mean Node

You will note at that time, Mars was in Libra, in opposition to Uranus in Aries, around 10 degrees. Both were forming a T-square to the USA Sun at 11° Cancer, but Pluto was already well past there. It was at 19° Cancer. By the time Uranus squared Pluto, it was well past the USA Sun-Saturn square. Thus, the aspects of the Great Depression were hard, but not as exact and potent as today's aspects.

Since the theme of Pluto in “Survival, Termination, or Transformation,” has already been established, let's begin there. Transiting Pluto is in opposition to the USA Sun, square to its Saturn. Briefly put, a hard aspecting transit of Pluto to one's natal Sun is a harbinger of a powerful life transformation. In many cases, the life itself is threatened. The Sun, after all, rules the physical heart and the source of one's vitality. Pluto is the need to repair, correct, or transform - or else the possibility of termination, of ending the life or the project, has to be considered.

So right away, we see the potential threat to USA's very survival, and the strong possibility of a change in course brought about either by force, circumstance, or ruinous decisions that evoke danger to its existence - financial, physical, or relationships with others. With Pluto, especially in Capricorn, this is serious business, the kind that can make or break a business, a nation, or a life. In this case, we are talking about a nation, the United States of America.

We also know that events associated with Pluto do not always culminate during the Pluto transit. Choices are made then that involve the principles, or even the prospect, of survival. But a Pluto transit is like an incubation period. It takes time for the consequences of those decisions to result in actual events.

For example, under a hard Pluto transit, one may decide to take out a large loan for an ill-advised business effort. But while the Pluto transit is in hard aspect to a natal planet, there is no bankruptcy that occurs from taking on more debt than one can afford. That comes later, after the aspect has passed. But the cause for the financial bankruptcy that happens afterwards can be traced to the choices made during the Pluto transit.

In many cases, the transit of Pluto is a choice of self-destruction. When it aspects one's Sun, however, one tends to be in denial of his/her vulnerability, even mortality. In time, a Pluto transit will produce a humbling transformation, but it may be too late to turn the tide. The die has been cast, and now the consequences must be met, and Pluto is not a merciful god, especially when going through the land of Capricorn, where the law is this: you get what you deserve, according to the acts you commit. No more, no less.

As an example of this "incubation" principle of Pluto, look again at the chart of the first week of September 1929, when the USA stock market began crashing, Pluto was already well-past the Sun-Saturn aspect. In fact, that happened in 1924-25, during the heyday of prohibition, bootlegging, and the rise of Chicago-style gangsters. It was a time of scandals, such as the "Teapot Dome Scandal," where it was found that power was rampantly misused for private gain in the Harding Administration.

It was also the time of the Locarno Conference where treaties were signed guaranteeing peace in Europe between France and Germany. It was a "reset button" between countries that were bitter enemies during World War I. Sound familiar?

Going back to the September 1929 chart, you will note that Uranus was in exact aspect to the USA Sun-Saturn square in 1929-1931. That's when the stock market crashed. Uranus is back in that aspect now. Pluto is incubation: events happen later. Uranus is warp speed. Events happen suddenly and much faster than anyone expected. Right now, the USA is under a heavy affliction from both, to its executive branch and its lawmaking, legislative branch. The very core of the government is under a cosmic attack. And if you believe "As above, so below," the USA is also under attack now as well... from within and from without.

So if you were to ask me: Will the USA - as we know it - perish during the next 1-2 years, or go bankrupt during this time due to the transit of Pluto in such a hard aspect to the natal USA chart, I would say, "Probably not. But the choices its leaders are making now could indeed lead to such an outcome later on."

But if you ask me if the USA is vulnerable to surprise attacks and unexpected developments affecting its economic and financial security due to the presence of Uranus in a hard aspect, I would say, "Probably yes." The USA is vulnerable to sudden disruptive events affecting its direction and leadership, and the decisions currently being made by the leadership are vulnerable to errors that could lead to dire consequences in the not too distant future... consequences that could indeed affect its current world status, and even its existence as we know it today. As stated before, Pluto is in Capricorn. This is serious business. Uranus is in Aries. Events are happening at lightning speed, much faster than anyone expected or are prepared for, especially the leadership of the USA.

THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF THE NATAL CHART

Just to be clear, let me repeat again: The United States is in danger of losing (even terminating) its identity - its very character - as we now know it, and have known it for the past 200+ years. Its status as the world leader is at stake, as shown by a combination of aspects from Pluto to its Sun/Saturn square, and the nature of circumstances present in the nation and world today.

But exactly what are those circumstances and conditions today that threaten the very existence of the United States? Are those conditions external, whereby others threaten the safety and survival of the USA? Or are they coming from within the country itself, which threatens to destroy the USA from within? Or both? Or is this pure fantasy, and as President Obama states, the USA is safer and stronger than ever? I submit to you that it is both, and that the danger is real. However, the idea that the USA will *perish* is not inevitable. It can survive. It can recover. But will it?

The natal USA chart is strong, especially the chart proposed here for July 2, 1776, 11:50 AM. It is very powerful and was constructed to last a very long time, and nothing - no transit or progression - supersedes the promise of a natal chart. This we know as students of astrology. Everything defaults back to the potentials of the natal chart. That chart dominates the course of life in the view of an astrologer.

So let's examine whether the USA natal chart is strong enough to sustain the threats that comes from without and from within.

According to Abraham Lincoln, as stated in his Lyceum Address in Springfield, IL, when he was only 28 years old, on January 27, 1838...

“At what point shall we (the USA) expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant, to step the Ocean, and crush us at a blow? Never!--All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest; with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years.

At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reaches us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.”⁶

Clearly, in Lincoln's view at the time, the greatest threat to the survival of the USA was not from abroad or any country outside of the USA. The greatest threat was within the USA itself.

So, as asked by D'Souza in, “America: Imagine a World Without Her:” Is America on the path to commit suicide? Is there a “dark side” to the character of the United States that could lead to the nation's destruction from within?

Before answering that question, let's begin with the basic premise upon which the

United States Declaration of Independence was written. It states,

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

But what does this mean that *“All men are created equal?”* What is meant by *“unalienable rights?”*

In the chart of the USA proposed before, *“All men are created equal”* is a central theme of Libra. I have chosen Libra rising for this reason.

However, even if Libra is not rising, we still find Saturn exalted in Libra, which again places the theme of “equality” very strongly in the USA chart. By having Libra rising, it also places Saturn in Libra in the first house, which amplifies this theme - this value - of fairness and equality for all.

Some astrologers might cringe at the suggestion of Saturn rising in the USA chart. *“How can that be,”* you might ask. *“Isn’t Saturn rising a sign of hardship, either mentally or in terms of life circumstances?”*

To which I would answer: *“No, not necessarily with it being in Libra, a position of exaltation. That gives it gravitas, importance in the world, and a level of respect in the world as a force of justice and fairness.”*

Additionally, with the Sun, Venus, and Jupiter all conjunct on the MC, this would provide a balance to the seriousness, the heaviness, usually associated with Saturn. Here we have a nice blend of good will (Sun-Venus-Jupiter) and gravitas (Saturn). We have a blend of prosperity and wealth (Sun-Venus-Jupiter) with hard work and effort (Saturn).

Usually, a balance between Jupiter and Saturn in positions of importance in a chart indicates an entity whose judgment is held in high esteem. It commands respect. And yet there is a generous, giving spirit to the otherwise demanding nature of Saturn rising. I think this describes an important quality of the American character and its position in the world after over 200 years of existence.

But let's go further regarding the identity of Libra rising, on July 2, 1776 for the USA, in addition to the idea that historical facts seem to bear this out.

If Libra is rising, what is the nation's ruling planet? It is Venus. And Venus is where? In Cancer, conjunct Jupiter, and part of a stellium with the Sun on the MC.

This is a very strong chart, with all the benefics together in Cancer, the sign of one's home, or country. It is no wonder that Americans are so patriotic. And with the benefics on the MC, it supports the idea that America could - would - become one of the greatest countries in the history of world civilization. Planets on the MC are born to last. Countries or companies with planets on the MC are born to last, especially if those planets are benefics (i.e. Sun, Venus, or Jupiter).

Now let's return to the Declaration of Independence and the USA natal chart, which

greatly illuminates the *original* character of America and its citizens.

The belief that “All men are *created* equal” was the rallying cry behind the Civil War and the drive to abolish slavery in the USA. The USA was - and is - the only country in history in which the dominant segment of its population (white people) sacrificed their lives (300,000) and fought for the freedom of slaves, a minority segment of the country's population.

No other nation on earth has ever done this. And yet the greatest stain on the psyche of America is its history of slavery, much like Germany has with its national guilt about Nazism. This is not to minimize the original stain or guilt of displacing the Native American Indians from their homeland. However, the moral stain of slavery is even greater in the American psyche.

Even today, the moral consequences of slavery continue to plague America. This guilt has not been resolved, although great social progress in terms of racial equality and opportunity has taken place in America since the 1960's. To some, however, it is not enough. And discussing it makes most Americans very uneasy.

Where does this stain, this guilt, from slavery show up in the natal chart? It could very well be a function of the Moon conjunct Pluto in Capricorn. This signature would not be present on July 4, when the Moon would have been in Aquarius, and in a wide trine to Mars and Uranus in Gemini and Saturn in Libra.

Now consider: what astrologically pertains to the concept of bondage and slavery, and then to feel immense collective guilt about it? What is the planet and sign connected to forced bondage, like slavery? It would be a combination of Pluto and Saturn, and perhaps the sign of Capricorn. These are the principles of bondage, and arguably slavery - forcing and coercing others to do labor against their will and without their consent.

And what is the sign of *guilt* for committing acts of moral injustice? It would be the sign Capricorn and again the planet Saturn. These are the correlates of *guilt* in astrology - not the *judgment* of guilt, but the *personal sense* of guilt, that somehow “*I have done something wrong, and for that I deserve a consequence, a punishment perhaps. If no one catches me, and I get away without a punishment, my conscience will be tormented.*” This is the nature of Saturn and Capricorn, exaggerated by the presence of Pluto.

And what is the planet that rules the subconscious, things from the past that you cannot shake off easily, which one carries under the radar, and which affects behaviors long after the deed is done? That would be the Moon, especially in Capricorn.

So consider that the greatest stain on the America psyche has been slavery, and that it shows powerfully in this July 2, 1776 chart with Saturn rising in Libra, in square aspect by sign to the Moon-Pluto conjunction in Capricorn.

And yet, hundreds of thousands of this nation's citizens also fought to liberate slaves from bondage, because they also believed that “*All men are created equal.*” To allow slavery to be legal was a massive contradiction of this greater belief that “... *all men are*

created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

In other words, Saturn exalted in Libra, plus the Sun-Venus-Jupiter stellium on the MC (top of the chart), trumps the Moon-Pluto conjunction in Capricorn in the final outcome. The bad deed was corrected. Men sacrificed their lives over it. But the guilt is still there, under the surface, just like one would expect with Moon-Pluto conjunct in Capricorn.

Now compare this with the July 4 chart of the Moon in Aquarius, trine Mars in Gemini and Saturn in Libra. Where is the history of bondage and guilt here regarding slavery, regarding racism? This is more a signature of the value placed upon freedom, which is valued anyway by the strong presence of Jupiter with the Sun on either date.

But back to the idea that *all men are created equal* and how this shows in the USA natal chart. Obviously, not *all men are equal* in the fullness of a life. Some are smarter than others, some are more athletic. In fact, no one is equal to another person in all aspects of life's experience. But all men were *created* equal, according to the Declaration of Independence. And this is a big deal, because until the United States came along, this concept did not exist in the government policy of any nation in world history.

It's what one does with their life after birth that determines one's lot in life in America, unlike most other places in the world. In America, one has the opportunity to grow beyond the cultural and social restrictions of their birth. This is why the USA is so desirable as a destination for immigrants all around the world. People may not want to be like Americans, but they want the opportunity that exists in America of “unalienable rights,” and the freedom to *pursue Life, Liberty, and Happiness*.

These concepts are tied closely together as the foundation upon which America was created in July 1776. At least, it used to be that way, back then, a long time ago. But there is a dark side to America too, as also shown in this natal chart.

THE DARK SIDE OF AMERICA

The dark side of any chart, the shadow that lurks beneath the surface in any chart, is Pluto, and in this case, it is the Moon conjunct Pluto in Capricorn, a combination that is truly symbolic of “The Dark Side of the Moon.”

Not only is this combination symbolic of such coercive acts as slavery and Native American Indian displacement, but it also symbolizes the quest for power (Pluto) by the government (Capricorn) doing things - manipulating things - behind the scenes.

It is also symbolic of a network of spying activities, of probing into the personal lives of its citizens without their approval, of entering into the affairs of other nations for the benefit of American and personal capitalistic interests under the disguise of “for the benefit of that nation it enters.”

It is symbolic of the hatred others have of America, and even of many of those within America, who see the nation and its leadership as morally corrupt, self-serving, and

power-driven, and who wish to see America punished, and even destroyed for these behaviors.

Which brings us to the next point: Is the threat to America's survival primarily from within or from the outside? Is it internal or external?

THE PROGRESSED CHART OF THE USA AND MARS RETROGRADE

The ability of a country to defend itself or to conquer other nations is a function of its military strength. When a country conquers another nation, it tends to do two things:

1. Occupy that land and make the inhabitants subject to its laws and rules
2. Enslave the citizens of that country, forcing them to work for no pay

To the credit of the United States, unlike other conquering nations in history, it has done neither. When it enters war and is victorious, it doesn't treat the people it defeated as slaves. It does not wish to occupy the territory of those it has defeated. It simply wants them to rebuild successfully and quickly, start trading with America, and stop threatening its existence. That's all. Well, that is all it should want and claims to want, but the "dark side" of America is that it often goes into these countries and tries to nation-build so that it conforms to - and benefits - the economic needs and wishes of America and its large corporations. Think Halliburton and other large American companies that allegedly tried to benefit personally from the Iraqi conflict.

The presence of Mars in a horoscope shows a nation's military capability. If we ask the question: "Is the USA in danger of being taken over by another military power," we start by looking at Mars. We want to see how strong that military might is.

In the natal chart proposed here, the USA finds Mars in Gemini, square Neptune in Virgo, and trine to Saturn in Libra. There is nothing particularly outstanding about Mars in Gemini as a military super power. In fact, it is a source of conflicting behaviors and approaches, for Gemini is a dual sign. Half the nation wants peace and non-involvement, the other half favors war and fierce aggression when threatened. Even presidents exhibit this contradictory behavior by first threatening things like "red lines in the sand," and then backing away from such threats, re-translating that what they really meant was.

The square to Neptune is also not a signature of any great military strength. In fact, it is a signature of passive-aggression. We enter a conflict but we refuse to call it a war. We call it a war, when it is only a tempest in a teapot. We threaten strong action, and then stand back. We wait forever, we argue back and forth about the justification to unleash our military might. And as soon as we do, the president is criticized and found negligent or guilty of superseding his authority. And of course, only Congress can declare war, even though the president is Commander in Chief, another Mars/Neptune conflict.

So where does the natal chart show that the USA has such great military strength? It is in the solstice point of Mars, which falls at 10° Cancer. A solstice point is that point which is equidistant from the summer (0° Cancer) or winter (0° Capricorn) solstice axis.

With natal Mars at 19° 51' of Gemini, it is 10° 09' prior to 0° Cancer. Therefore, if you add 10° 09' to 0° Cancer, the Mars solstice point is at 10° 09' Cancer, conjunct the Sun, and right in the stellium with Venus and Jupiter on the July 2 MC. The solstice point is like having a twin planet, with the same principles as its natal cohort. This, then, becomes a very powerful Mars, indicative of an exceptionally powerful military capability.

The USA chart shows a significant change in its military status over the last few years, corresponding to a change of direction in its progressed Mars. If one uses *July 2* as the correct founding of the USA, then progressed Mars turned retrograde in 2008-2009 as Barack Obama assumed the role of President of the USA. If *July 4* is the correct starting date, then Mars turned retrograde by progression in 2006-2007. That was when George W. Bush was president and in fact, it was when he ordered the *increase* of troops to escalate the war in Iraq, which quickly turned the tide in favor of Iraqi independence - for a while.

Now consider what progressed Mars retrograde indicates in regards to a nation's military ability and strength. Does the retrograde motion of a planet by progression indicate advancement, or a retreat, from the principles of the planet? It indicates a retreat.

As Obama took office, one of the first matters on his agenda was to reduce the military budget, to scale back military plans and military weapons, such as nuclear warheads. According to D'Souza, *"Obama has taken America's nuclear arsenal down from 6000 to 1500 warheads and now he wants to go to 1000 and eventually to zero. He says he wants a world free of nuclear weapons, which seems like an admirable goal, except that no other nuclear power is interested... by shrinking our nuclear arsenal Obama ensures that America's relative global strength is diminished. So is America's ability to protect its allies."*⁷

But in reality, Russia has also cut back on the rate of growth of its nuclear arsenal. Or, at least they did until recently. Now, however, all the treaties between the USA and Russia have "gone up in smoke" with the recent conflict between Russian president Vladimir Putin and USA President Barack Obama. There is no more talk of a "reset" of relations between the two countries. They are not exactly working on the same agenda anymore. And this too is a source of concern to Americans. Why is America back in a Cold War with Russia? And is this not an entirely new threat to America's survival?

When you look at the progressed USA chart, you see Mars retrograde, which by itself describes the effort to retreat the American military. This progressed retrograde Mars will last until 2086-2087. By itself, this does not augur well for the USA to remain the sole military super power on the planet. In fact, it suggests their status is already changing as of 2008-2009.

But something else may be evolving in place of American military superiority. Mars is in Libra, and Libra is a sign of peace and harmony. The progressed Sun is now in Pisces, which is the other sign of peace and harmony. Instead of being a military superpower, the USA is transforming into a diplomatic, peace-initiating, super power.

Barack Obama is the face of this transformation. When he assumed office, his stated goal was indeed to *transform* America. So when we suggest that America is in a state of *transformation*, or even survival, we are talking about Pluto. And it is Pluto that is in opposition to the USA Sun, square it's Saturn, which relates to these issues of survival and/or transformation. And it is natal Pluto that conjoins the USA Moon in Capricorn, which pertains to its "dark side" and the guilt within America's psyche. It also relates to the possibility - or fear - that others want to destroy America.

With Obama, we get all of this. And this is the time in the cosmic scheme of things that America gets a President who is

- 1) the agent of transformation
- 2) a reflection of deep-seated collective guilt for moral wrongs (slavery) committed in America's past
- 3) a projection of our collective fears that he may also be someone who hates this country and wants to see it destroyed, brought down from its heights as a world leader and military superpower, or through his actions, that the country will perish and even cease to exist.

There is a growing fear that under his leadership - or lack of leadership in the minds of many - that America is on the path towards ruin. People either love him or hate him, but the vast majority of Americans today firmly believe that under his presidency, America is going in the wrong direction, that he is a divider, not a unifier, as pointed out in the first part of this section.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S CHART

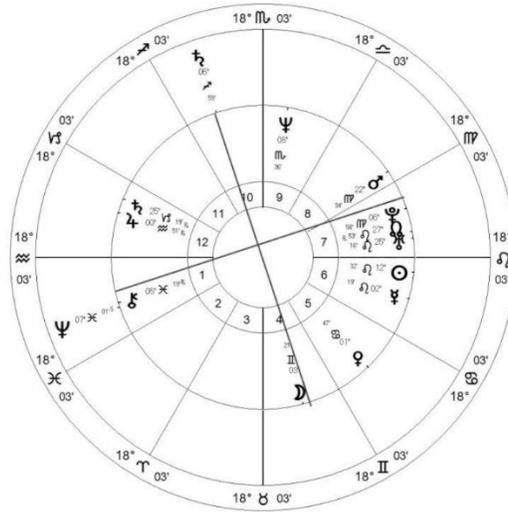
But is this true? Let us look at Obama's natal chart.

If he is the embodiment of Pluto in his time of presidency, then we should start by looking at his natal Pluto. Note that it is in Virgo, square his natal Moon and in opposition to his natal Chiron. Both have natal Moon-Pluto hard aspects - Obama (square) and the USA (conjunction). Not only does the USA have this deep-seated guilt for actions committed in the past, but so does Obama himself, though we may never know what those past actions were.

Our concerns right now are the position of transits to his natal chart. And here we see some extremely challenging aspects, notably the transit of Neptune in Pisces conjoining his natal Chiron, square his Moon, opposing his natal Pluto. Additionally, transiting Saturn will form a grand square to his natal Chiron-Moon-Pluto T-square in 2015 (see enclosed chart). Like everything else we have discussed, this is all too evident to an astrologer showing what our president has been going through. He has had - and continues to have - a difficult path to travel.

What does Neptune in hard aspect to one's natal Moon and Pluto represent? Well, Neptune-Moon is a classical scandal aspect. Have there been scandals in the past year? Well, yes, a few.

Inner Wheel
Barack Obama
 Male Chart
 Aug 4 1961, Fri
 7:24 pm AHST +10:00
 Honolulu, HI
 21°N 182°5' 157°W 51°30"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Equal
 Mean Node



Outer Wheel
Transits Nov 17 2015
 Event Chart
 Nov 17 2015, Tue
 12:00 pm EST +5:00
 Washington, DC
 38°N 53°42' 077°W 02 12"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 0° Aries
 Mean Node

Neptune as a transiting affliction can also pertain to loss of credibility or trustworthiness. Has Obama had a credibility/trustworthy problem lately? Well, yes, that has happened too.

In late 2015, the transits of Saturn and Neptune will square one another, and together they create a grand mutable cross to his natal Chiron-Moon-Pluto. Saturn marks a time that demands accountability of all one has done over the past seven years (Saturn takes 7 years to move from conjunction to square, or 90° through the signs). Everything he has promised, everything he has started since 2008, will now bear the consequences and will be held responsible, for better or worse. It depends upon 1) his intentions (have they been honest or deceptive?) and 2) the results of his decisions initiated at that time. This is a time of judgment, not by him, but of him. It is a critical period, when he will likely be critical of others, and they will likely be critical of him. The issue here is Saturn and Neptune, or honor and integrity (Saturn) combined with trust (Neptune). At best, he acts with integrity and honesty, and accomplishes something great. He commands respect for leading others correctly at a very difficult time. At worst, he has acted deceptively. He is viewed as a betrayer of the trust placed in him, and as one who has failed in his duties and his word. In the latter case, he is stripped of his authority, and he finds much of his power removed. The choices are his. The consequences of his choices lie in the hands of others who pass judgment on those decisions and the courses of actions that he initiated over the past 7 years.

So Obama's credibility issues both at home and in the world, at a time when the USA's very survival is being threatened, is a serious problem. It escalates the present danger, because if the leader is weak, or weakened due to lack of trust in his abilities or character by others, it makes it harder to garner world support for that which needs to be done to protect the country, especially from its outer enemies. It makes it harder to lead

the country without the support of its citizens behind him. Obama's legacy, and the nation's survival, are at risk.

THE FUTURE OF THE USA PLUTO RETURN ON ITS MOON/PLUTO

OK. So the USA is in trouble.

We see this via the transits of Uranus and Pluto to the USA natal Sun-Saturn square. There is a crisis in leadership. Pluto to the USA Saturn that suggests very intense and revealing investigations are underway, and more will be coming. Pluto in opposition to the USA Sun indicates that the object of these investigations may be the president himself, or people close to him, doing his bidding. There are apt to be resignations, or dismissals, of people close to the president, in positions of authority.

The president's own behavior comes under scrutiny as the propensity for scandals continue. This is denoted by the transit of both Neptune and Saturn in a grand square aspect to Obama's natal planets. If not handled honestly and properly, the people of the United States will witness an unreal national tragedy. Much is at stake, for the country and for its president, in 2015.

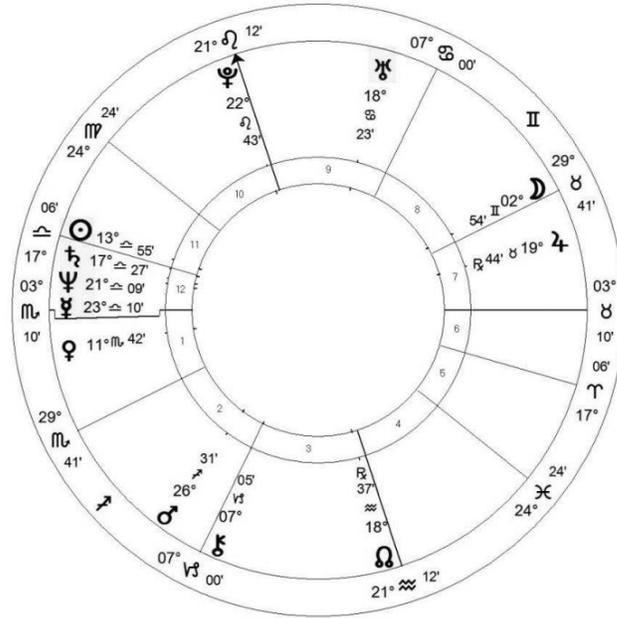
There is possibly a constitutional crisis, wherein the leader (President Obama) may be judged harshly for overstepping his executive authority, beyond the scope of his duties as outlined in the Constitution of the United States. Did he go beyond those duties? That will be decided by others, perhaps even by the Supreme court, probably in late 2015 and perhaps into 2016.

There may be a crisis between the lawmakers (Congress) and the President. They aren't working together. They are fighting one another, unless they agree to proceed methodically and slowly on issues that have a chance at bipartisan support. That is the message of Saturn's transit. Nothing goes fast, and if forced - bullied - before its time is ready, it leads to conflict, which in the end, makes the passage of anything substantial next to impossible.

No one is unifying the two parties or the two branches of government in the face of a two growing external dangers: one from ISIS and perhaps another from Russia and Vladimir Putin, who apparently has no respect for Barack Obama and continues to defy him at every turn. It is most interesting that Putin's natal Sun is conjunct the USA Saturn, at 13-14 ° Libra, square to the USA Sun. It is also interesting that he and Obama both have the Moon conjunct at 3° Gemini. The three entities (Putin, Obama, and the USA) are tied together, especially right now under the Uranus-Pluto cardinal square. This is truly a cosmic drama of great importance unfolding.

There is also an internal USA conflict as Americans by and large no longer trust their leader following a series of scandals and apparent distortions of truth to the American people throughout the past two years. America is in danger of imploding from within, and exploding from without, as it goes to war with ISIS, a war cycle that seems to come up every 11, 22.5, and 45 years, perhaps correlating with sunspot cycles or Uranus- Pluto harmonics. According to www.spaceweather.com, November 13, 2014, "*Late last month,*

the biggest sunspot in nearly 25 years crossed the face of the sun, blasting Earth's upper atmosphere with dozens of solar flares.”



Vladimir Putin, October 7, 1952, 9:30 AM, St. Petersburg, Russia (from Solar Fire database)

Right now, you can see that the danger to the USA (and even the world) is both external and internal. But coming up in a few short years is a classic aspect of survival that originates from within, just as Abraham Lincoln predicted nearly 200 years ago.

The aspect I am referring to is the conjunction of Saturn and Pluto in late Capricorn in 2020, conjunct the July 2, 1776 conjunction of the Moon and Pluto.

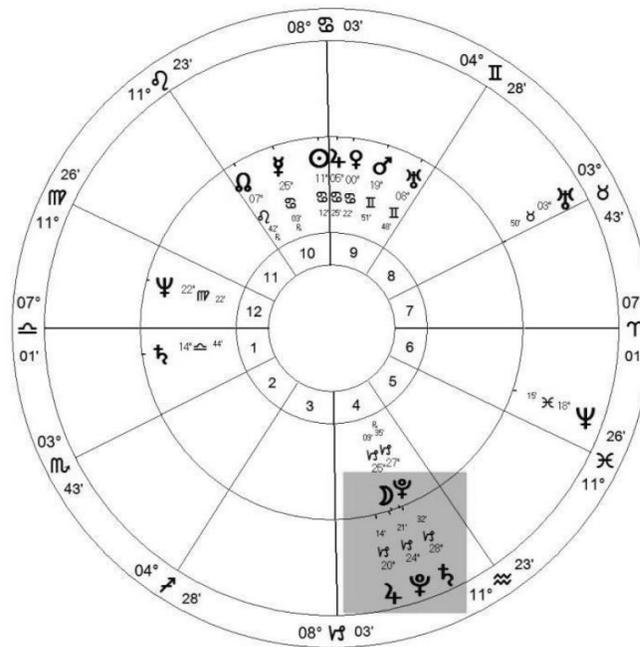
Here is when the dark side of America's psyche rises to the surface. Here is when the enemy from within is most likely to strike. Here is when America will likely decide if it is to survive, perish, or transform.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

So, with all these Plutonian threats coming up, will America survive, perish, or transform? After all, that is the title of this section of Forecast 2015.

Inner Wheel
United States July 2
 Natal Chart
 Jul 2 1776 NS, Tue
 11:50 am LMT +5:00:39
 Philadelphia, PA
 39°N57'08" 075°W09'51"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 Mean Node

Outer Wheel
United States July 2
Event of Mar 4, 2020
 Transit Chart
 Mar 4 2020, Wed
 4:16:45 pm LMT +5:00:39
 Philadelphia, PA
 39°N57'08" 075°W09'51"
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 Mean Node



Earlier, I made the comment that everything goes back to the natal chart. That is the dominant chart directing the play upon Earth.

If the chart I have proposed is accurate or nearly as accurate as I believe it is, based on historical data of events that happened on July 2, 1776, and the research of astrological and historical researchers whom I respect, and from whence I derived this chart, then the answer is YES, America will survive; it will not perish. This chart, based on the date and the time of vote for Independence, is made to last.

Yes, America's survival is threatened right now. America's survival could remain threatened in 2015, and perhaps even into the next decade. This is indicated by the potent and extremely challenging and dangerous set up of Uranus in a waxing square to Pluto, which creates a grand square to the USA natal Sun-Saturn square, especially 2013-2015. It is no doubt a difficult time, when the experiment of America is at risk.

But this is a transit, not a natal placement.

And even as a transit, it is a waxing square, not a waning square.

As I have stated in many writings, a waxing square is a *birthing* principle, unlike the waning square, which is more of an *ending* principle. What the USA is going through is like the pains of birth, or rebirth, and not the pain or loss from death. This is not the end. This is a threat, a crisis, but I believe the USA, as born on July 2, 1776 at 11:50 AM, is built to last and will survive this threat.

As mentioned before, I also believe the aspects of 2020 portend a new leader who

will be a unifier. The divisions within the USA will give way to the more common sense of a shared struggle, and a crisis that will require the USA to become more united and less divided. The nation will heal. It will recover from the pains of the Cardinal Climax, and even from those that began at the start of the 21st century.

How will that happen? I don't know. Maybe it will be a world war that brings Americans and its allies together once again. Maybe it will be natural calamity. With Pluto, there is almost always a threat to human life, either by nature or by human-initiated violence.

Maybe it will be new treaties between the USA and other world leaders that provide more security worldwide for everyone. Maybe there really is a reset between the USA and other leading military powers, like Russia, and perhaps China too.

Maybe multiple countries have a surge of realism and common sense and figure out that it is in everyone's best interest to have world peace, and not ongoing senseless conflict with one another.

Maybe, in the end, we just figure out what Nelson Mandela meant, when he spoke:

“Our human compassion binds us the one to the other - not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future... If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner”⁸

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