

As the Universe Turns

B. L. Zodiac

Ah, the turn of the year, anticlimax of the holy days. Dead of winter, eye of newt, darkness into dawn. Of the many pointed truths life serves up to those paying attention, the one most likely to keep us warm on a cold night is the teaching of the cycle; that the universe is a metaphor of infinite return; that wherever we go, there we are; and that the ends of things lie in their beginnings, imbedded in the womb of space/time like the acorns of creation. There is more magic here than mystery.

Meaning reduces finally to pattern, to questions of implicate order, function and form. With general relativity, Albert Einstein introduced a new and powerful idea; that the forces of nature are the rule of the geometry of space/time. To understand the unfolding of events, we must first discover this geometry; we must know, in other words, the shape of the universe. Although he was never able to prove it, Einstein believed the universe is a hypersphere: an infinite Platonic beach ball cast in four dimensions, three of space and one of time.

There is comfort here for prodigal children. On the surface of a sphere, straight line motion in any direction leads unerringly back to the source. Add to this circular motion the corkscrew of cosmic DNA whose spiral geometry unwinds change like the apple peel of creation, transforming what might be into what is. As dynamic systems go, it would be hard to imagine a prettier one.

But we are talking about the new year. Let's take a giddy leap of faith and, just for a moment, assume the irrational: that the foundations of astrology are not philosophical cowplop, that the cyclic movement of mass/energy in the solar system might be linked in the impeccable macramé of space/time to the willynilly chaos of our lives by some soft-edged humanistic trigonometry. The sceptical should take heart. There are many less logical assumptions; the divine right of government and the myth of the free lunch among them. If we accept this common implicate order, 1995 is a banner year. Two significant cycles, the orbits of Uranus and Pluto, intermesh.

Pluto is the furthest planet from the sun, its slow motion through the zodiac triggering the spiritual zeitgeist of each generation. Uranus is the planet of eccentricity and lightning change. It was, interestingly enough, assigned this nature centuries before we discovered it's the only planet in the solar system tilted ninety degrees on its magnetic axis. As any Aquarian will tell you, there's no explanation for this.

This year, Pluto (let's call it Spirit) moves from Scorpio to Sagittarius; from Water to Fire, from the dark myth of sex and death to the inspired lunacy of the prophet. Uranus, the little dear, is right there to grease the skids, moving from Capricorn to Aquarius, from Earth to Air, from the roots of material power to flights of unfettered spiritual equality. Enlightened change of profound nature is the phrase we're looking for.

Putting matters into perspective, this conjunction of transitions, of wheels within wheels, occurs just once every 250 years. Give or take a decade, the last time Pluto and Uranus played this tune was 1750. Ring a bell? It should. It was the peak of the Enlightenment, the flowering of the Age of Reason. Voltaire, Rousseau, David Hume and all that. Aquarius and Sagittarius are both intellectual signs, and, with the energy of Uranus and Pluto focused through them, you get (or at least astrologers do) space/time events like the French and American Revolutions. Liberté, égalité, fraternité. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The last time round, the Industrial Revolution met its worst nightmare: the new and improved peasant with access to a printing press.

Push the roots of coincidence further, shall we? Reversing the cycle another turn brings us (Gloriosky, will you look at that?) to 1500 and the High Renaissance: Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo and the boys. Art and science applied to the mysteries; the sense and the intellect romancing the soul. It was, in more ways than one, the Age of Exploration. Western civilization crawled out from its castles and mud huts, bloodied by the idiot carnage of the Crusades and hungering for meaningful adventure. It was, without exaggeration, the first Space Age. Magellan, de Gamma, and Columbus did not discover new lands. They discovered a new planet, a world of experience and possibility expanded, spherically, beyond their wildest imaginings.

This then is the cusp whose slick edge we stand perched upon. The seeds of change have been planted, what we've whistled for is about to come. The potential for change, both systemic and personal, hasn't been greater since Patrick Henry and his radical cabal dreamed up representative democracy as humanity's best shot at governing a society of equals. No, it didn't turn out exactly like they planned. And no, its transformation, which is to say its realization, will not happen Tuesday before noon. Inertia, both personal and celestial, being what it is, action lags badly behind perception. What we're witnessing is the endgame of a social paradigm and the conflict between human and machine can only become more naked and profane. Old orders never yield gracefully to the new. They do however yield.

Speaking plainly, and we really should, what's next on the schedule for humanity is to deliver the babe of the new aeon. Stop snickering. Regardless whether we believe in them or not, aeons exist. Yes, friends and neighbors, what we've got here is a mission. And, though it's a holy one (aren't they all?), we'd be halfwits to expect any help from organized religion. Its dominant forms will, bless their hearts, stifle spiritual freedom as desperate as the corporate priests will ridicule the notion that humans are anything more than software in the sacred mainframe of profit.

Laugh all we want, the vision of the universe that's dawning will, in fact must, fuse science and faith into a new world myth. Let's take this to the hoop, shall we? The unified field theory that's coming (see: superstrings and quantum cosmology) will constitute a new paradigm: this aeon's snapshot of the Holy Grail. In what physicists call the Theory of Everything, all elements of creation must interpenetrate. There will be no distinction between us and other, thee and me; no separation between souls and stars. By definition, the universe is One. In an equation in which the part is the idle dream of the whole, there can be no profit without loss. There can be, in fact, no loss. What will be, is, and always has been. That's why they call it a unified field.

Once again, there is magic here but no mystery. On the surface of a four dimensional sphere, there are no beginnings and endings. There are only middles. There is no birth and death, no grim reaper, no outside to come from or go to. There are only spiralling vectors of change; converging waves of possibility giving form to a closed and unbounded sea of potential. Nice, isn't it? A universe where all goings for guarantee returns and the ends of things are in their beginnings, like a mustard seed imbedded in the womb of space/time, like a final BurmaShave sign saying, "Happy New Year, Baby".



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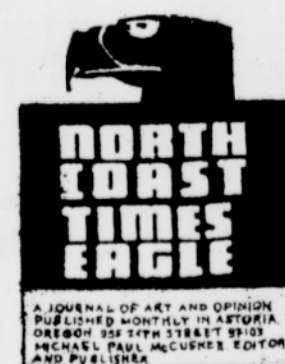
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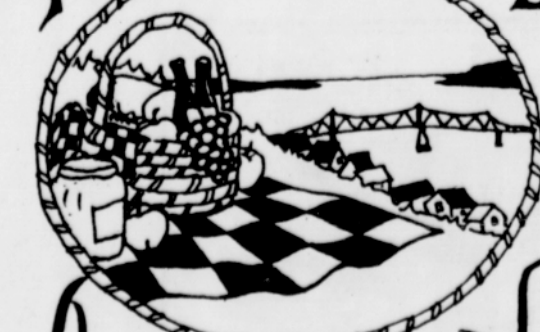
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