

# Year Ahead 2018 by Adam Smith CM

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New Year is a time to look forward and also to reflect: **Saturn is in Sagittarius** for the whole of 2018, likewise the nodes in Cancer-Capricorn, while **Jupiter is lodged in Libra** until October. January gets underway with the Full Moon in Gemini/Ardra, a nakshatra of purging and catharsis: this is a great time for your New Year resolution, whether to join the gym, quit smoking or to finally write that book. Or all the above.



**The Great American Eclipse** of August 21st 2017 (remember that?) came and went without obvious catastrophe, though the middle of last year had its hairy moments. Almost imperceptibly, the USA has become

a different place in the space of twelve months, more insular, divided and eccentric, and precisely the same can be said of post-Brexit Britain.

Both countries are in their Rahu mahadashas, which is a very 'political' period, in the sense of wheeling and dealing and chasing big ambitions. Donald Trump is breaking the mould of recent US policy, or perhaps only doing overtly what other administrations have done and believed in private. He is a lightning rod for liberal hate, and his Muslim ban is pure Saturn in Sagittarius. In Britain, meanwhile, Theresa May has survived her very low political sell-by date, and another General Election in 2018 seems unlikely if only because it appears nobody else currently wants the job. Jeremy Corbyn, like Bernie Sanders in the US, is to some degree channelling Neptune in Aquarius, the idealist placement of the Communist Manifesto, and while hugely popular with his core support, he remains an unknown quantity.



The previous solar eclipse to cross the American mainland in 1979 spawned hostilities between the US and Iran, a conflict that has defined the foreign policies of both countries ever since. Few if any contemporary astrologers seem to have predicted this. So is it too much to expect the events of 2017, vis, tensions with Korea and complex relations with Russia, to influence the geopolitical landscape for the next couple of generations? Like everything else, warfare has gone online.

Saturn has returned to its placement of the late 1980s, where glasnost and perestroika, goodwill and openness, were Sagittarius qualities that eventually brought down the Berlin Wall (as I said in this feature last year). Donald Trump gets a bucketload for everything he does, and it seems people despise him even for getting closer to the Russians. Whether this is his foreign policy masterstroke or because he is being blackmailed by Moscow, it would be some irony if such a divisive figure as he achieved a lasting detente. With ISIS also driven out of Syria, the changes of the last 12 months may only be appreciated long after the fact.



Mars in Sagittarius March 8th to May 3rd joins both major malefics, with Mars also aspecting the Sun in Pisces and Rahu in Cancer. The exact conjunction occurs on or about the March 31st Full Moon in Virgo. With Mercury also retrograde, this will be a volatile moment and possibly the cue for a dramatic hand-break turn.

The next two years see a period of (further) transition up to 2020, which most astrologers agree will be a pivotal year. Between Pluto and the Jupiter-Saturn Grand Conjunction, all in Capricorn, this will see a gradual rebirth of politics which is already appearing. The previous entry of Pluto in Capricorn 1772-92 saw the American, French and Industrial Revolutions. The roots of the American Revolution lay in the Financial Crisis of 1772, at which a shock went through the British economy, forcing the government to raise taxes in the Colonies. The Boston Tea

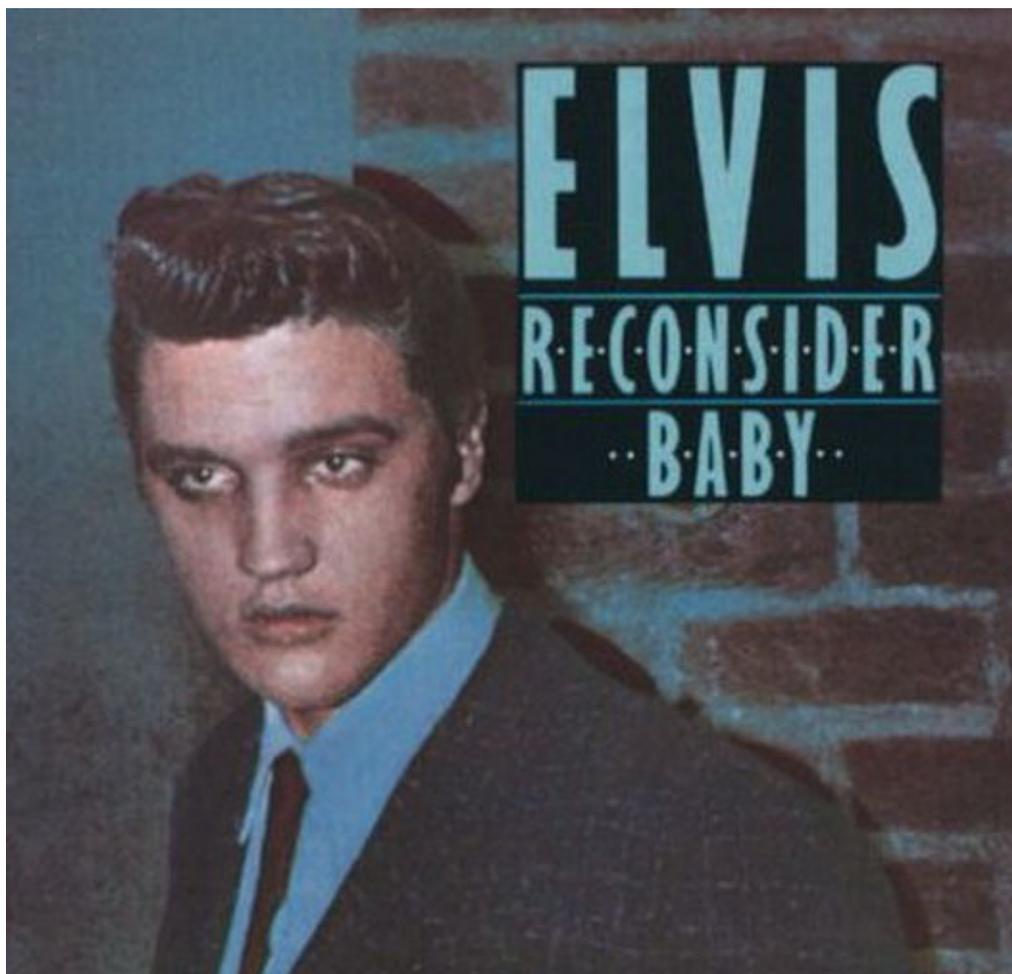
Party and consequences followed directly from this.

The Pluto in Capricorn transit before this 1525-41 saw the Protestant Reformation in Britain, and while Luther's initial revolution came with Pluto in Sagittarius, the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII was pure Pluto in Capricorn power politics. Transits like this really are on a historic level. The one upcoming will see a gradual blitz of the old political system, and it is also not a huge interpretive leap to predict a large financial 'adjustment' after the credit bingeing Sagittarius years.



By way of an aperitif to this Capricorn era, 2018 sees **Mars in exaltation for six months** between May 3rd and November 7th. In Aries, Mars is a soldier, in Scorpio he is a secret agent, but in Capricorn he is a general and politician conducting a strategic campaign. Mars here is at his best, giving energy, stamina and discipline, and you can win important battles this year in the Capricorn corner of your chart. In Capricorn, Mars aspects Aries, Cancer and Leo, so the Sun is afflicted/energized from May 3rd to 15th and from July 17th to May 18th. This passage also involves a conjunction with Ketu in June and July, where particularly sensitive will be the **lunar eclipse at 10 Capricorn on July 27th**: on this day Mars will also be at its closest to the Earth since 2003 (hmm, what happened in that year?). Watch out for **seismic activity** at this time, and it's also well to avoid rash decisions and

certainly to drive carefully.



We also have another **Venus retrograde** in 2018 from October 5th to November 17th: forty days and nights. This phase mirrors the October 2010 Venus retro, and over the eight-year cycle the planet's orbit describes its famous five-pointed synodic pattern with the Earth. There was a Venus retro last year too, so you can reference March 3rd to April 15th 2017 for a real-world check into its impact. Typically, this phase brings an adjustment when someone you thought you knew turns out not to be quite so familiar – you'll see a different side of them. Your creativity may change course or be reawakened, and there may also be a change of heart around a sale or financial deal. Venus is strong in Libra for the whole retrograde arc, so there is potential for a charm offensive and also to do some good business.

**Jupiter heads into Scorpio** on October 12th, where it makes a mutual

aspect with Rahu in Cancer. This is a Guru-Chandala yoga, which may be good for business and politics, though also corrupting of Jupiter's essential sattvic nature. Between this and Venus retrograde, we may see more unusual bedfellows in 2018, with alliances between enemies or expedient deals done despite initial shock. Donald Trump is the go-to guy for this. 'The Weinstein effect' has been one of the big breakthroughs of 2017, and Jupiter in Scorpio may see more skeletons coming out.

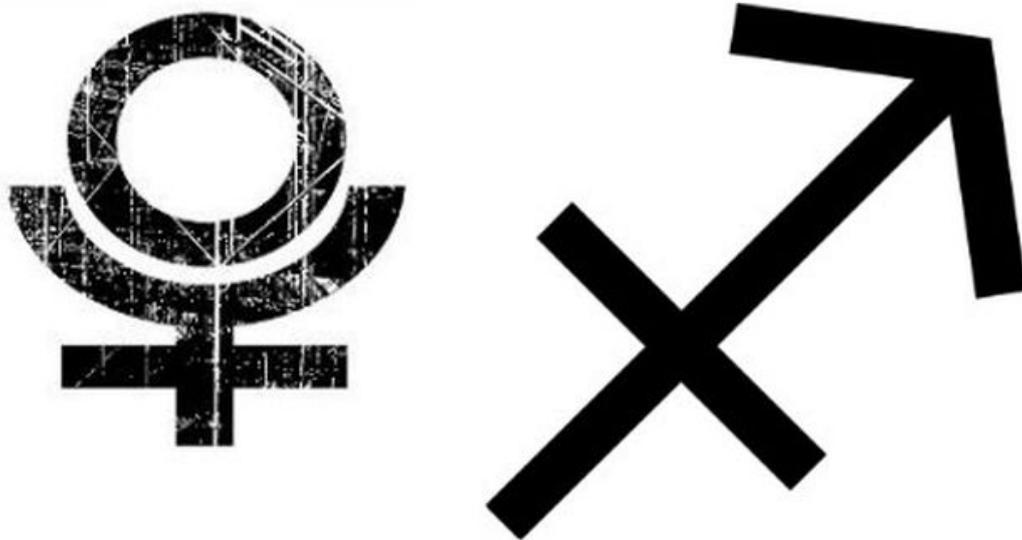


**Eclipses** this year are in Cancer, Aquarius and Gemini, starting with a lunar eclipse on January 31st at 17° Cancer/Ashlesha. This is followed by a solar eclipse on **15th February at 2°**

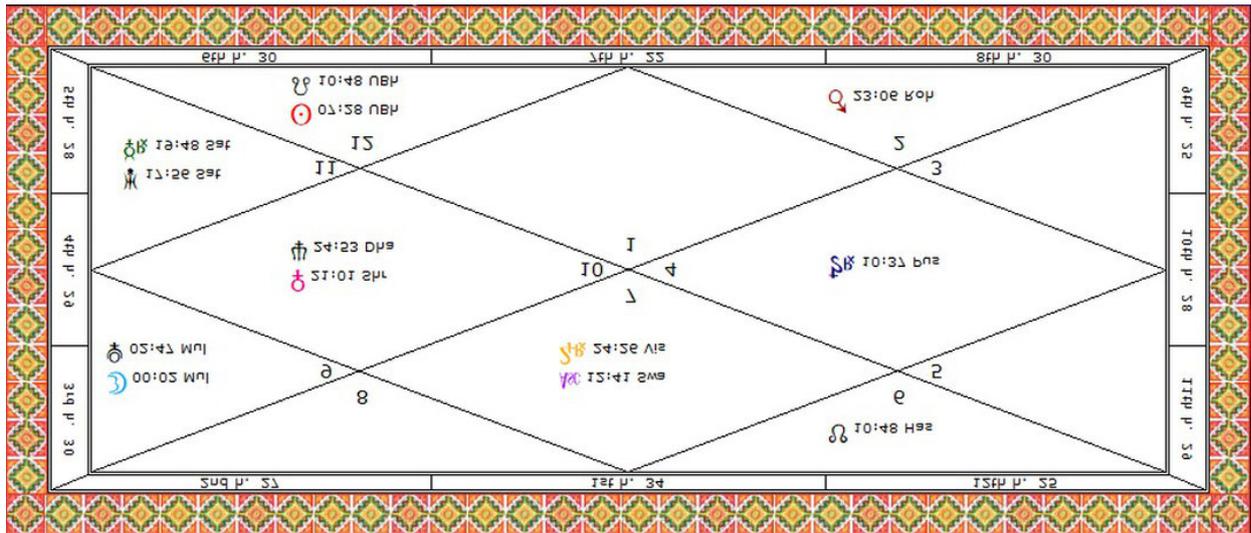
**Aquarius/Dhanishta.** Summer is eclipse season proper with first a solar eclipse at **26° Gemini/Punarvasu on July 13th**, then a lunar at **10° Capricorn/ Shravana on July 27th**. Rounding it off is a solar eclipse on **August 11th at 23° Cancer/ Ashlesha**.

Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are now lodged in their signs for the year and beyond, respectively Aries, Aquarius and Capricorn. **Uranus in Aries** started with June 2016, right after the Brexit vote, and its headstrong, nationalistic flavour sets the tone for politics and business until 2023. Entrepreneurship and creativity is king while computers do the scutwork: Isaac Asimov, are you listening? Neptune in Aquarius has brought back romantic notions of socialism, while all our boundaries are being obliterated by the digital revolution. Pluto is coming towards the end of Sagittarius, and Saturn joining it in this sign should solidify its

background shading over the previous decade and beyond. The exact conjunction doesn't come until 2020, but we can still expect the bad and the ugly, and hopefully some good too.



Since February 2005 **Pluto in Sagittarius** has brought us the War on Terror and general fear and suspicion of Pan Islam. Suicide terrorism came to the UK in that year with a series of coordinated bombings in London, since when we have all lived with the threat, real or imagined, of Al Qaeda then ISIS. Pluto combining with Saturn for the last two years of its stay in Sagittarius up to 2020 may bring more religious upheaval, though also constructive changes. The Christian Church split after Martin Luther in 1517 while Pluto was in Sagittarius, and some say Islam is due for its own Reformation, or legitimizing of dissent and doctrinal debate, in the present time. Meanwhile, Donald Trump's Muslim ban is signature Saturn in the sign of religion and the toxic state of interfaith relations continues.



**Twitter: first tweet. March 21 2006, 20:50, Los Angeles**

Social Media has been another defining Pluto in Sagittarius feature, with **YouTube** appearing in 2005 and the first **Tweet** being sent in March 2006. Sagittarius is a supposedly tolerant and egalitarian sign, and Pluto here has evolved a belief system of hyper political correctness with often hysterical righteous indignation. Twitter-shaming and bullying for every micro-infraction of liberal left values – the dreaded inappropriateness - has become proverbial, while its shadow side, black vitriolic bile slung under the cover of anonymity is the cyber version of the toilet wall. Social media offers a kind of purgation rather like the pillory or village stocks, shown in the chart of the first Tweet, with the Moon applying closely to Pluto. Emotional overreaction is the new default.



### **Postscript**

2018 sees a **Winter Olympics** in South Korea, a **World Cup Finals** (soccer) in Russia, and **Royal Wedding** between Prince Henry Windsor and Meghan Markle. No predictions for the World Cup yet, but European teams generally do better on their own soil - not good news for Brazil or Argentina. There's a solar eclipse two days before the final on July 15th, which could spell an upset, or at least some drama in the closing stages. The Royal Wedding is on the same day as the English FA Cup Final: **Harry & Meghan** look good together but their synastry isn't great - wishing them all the best, they might need it. Finally, soccer supremo extraordinaire **Pep Guardiola** has harnessed his neecha bhanga Saturn and his Manchester City side are running away with the English Premier League: there may be a stutter, but I don't seem them being caught.