

THE ROOSTER OF SOLITUDE

Pt II

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Following Part I on the more strictly astrological interpretation for the year, the big question now is, what do we see on the world stage for 2017? And how will last year dovetail into the influences for the coming year? To get an idea of what is to come, we need to see the context of what was brought forward in the Mountain Monkey year and in past such years. Past Mountain Monkey years have brought the following major influences in bold, going back several centuries, followed by what we actually saw last year, as follows:

- **2016 is likely to mark a key year for the US, Britain, France, Israel and Turkey. (Mountain Monkey years in recent history have not gone well for Anglo or French interests, nor for Turkish interests.)**

This was indeed the case, as we saw in the Brexit vote, Donald Trump's presidential victory, Turkey having to give up its ambitions as they were in Syria and their attempted coup, great unrest in France which is largely unreported in the mainstream media and the recent vote in the UN which went against Israel.

- **I have also seen forecasts of pandemics for this year, but this is something that I do not see.**

There were no pandemics in 2016, nor in other Mountain Monkey Years. The zika virus continues to be a concern, as are the usual suspects such as malaria and so forth, but there were no large-scale outbreaks in 2016 that caused mass deaths.

- **The dire prediction for 2016 related to Europe by a little-known psychic from the Balkans who in the West is known by the name of Vanga.**

It didn't happen, happily. This was largely a scaremongering piece that was meant to incite anti-Islamic sentiment. Vanga never actually said it. In fact, what we saw in Europe was the beginning of border controls designed to stop the inflow of migrants from the Middle East and Africa, with growing anti-Islamic, anti-refugee sentiments.

- **A decisive battle in the Syrian-Iraqi theater or elsewhere in the Middle East, one that will probably not go so well for the West or Turkey, or even for Saudi Arabia if past Mountain Monkey years hold true. I see more independence in and for the Middle East.**

The tide was turned in the Syrian War in 2016 by Russian and Syrian government forces, and Daesh is on its way out. Saudi Arabia is also not faring well in the Yemeni conflict. Daesh has lost a quarter of the territory it gained at its height, and the important point to note in this regard is that the territory it lost are the major cities. There were, as predicted, decisive battles in that arena in 2016, and they did not go well for Western, Saudi or Turkish interests.

- **Things probably won't go so well for Israel this year, either.**

The UN voted to condemn Israeli settlements in the occupied areas, with the abstention of the US vote, enabling the resolution to pass.¹

- **A fundamental shakeup in the conservative movement in US politics, also a more progressive outlook in US politics in general. This relates especially to financial lobbying in US politics, which has a large carry-on effect in world politics.**

This depends upon how one looks at the situation, but there has been a shakeup with the election of Trump, in that Republicans are firmly entrenched in power now, where they were expected to be weakened by many of the polls and pundits. Also, the Democratic Party has turned out to be more elitist and more in bed with big money than was generally admitted in the main, as well as being out

of touch with and increasingly divorced from their voter base, which led to their defeat in the election. This shock is beginning to energize the party more toward its progressive roots, though. In fact, Donald Trump ran on a platform that had many progressive themes in it, and in the past he has been a registered Democrat. In true Mountain Monkey fashion, there was a twist in the outcome of the election due to manipulation of voting districts by Republicans, which are now being reversed by federal courts, manipulation of and by the media and Hillary Clinton's appearance as being simply a continuation of the policies that have consistently disadvantaged middle America. And if we peek below the surface, the US is more progressive in its outlook than would appear outwardly, as witnessed by the large protests and pressure brought to bear against Trump's executive orders since he has taken office and after his inauguration. People voted for Trump not because he was Republican – which he is not – but because he represented a change from the more entrenched politics, the neoliberal economic agenda and the neocon agenda that has consistently sought to disadvantage the average American citizen. As is becoming apparent, the entire political system in the US is under increasing pressure for change, and Trump's election has signaled the start of it in palpable terms, little as many might like the outcome.

- **The start of a more energetic reorganization of the world financial structure.** We already see this in the volatility of China, moves toward other financial centers such as the BRICS nations, the moves away from the dollar standard in oil, sluggish recoveries in Western economies, low oil prices, etc. It is likely to be a scary year financially, especially initially, but a fresher outlook will emerge, with the following year cementing finances on a sounder footing. The Rooster, which follows the Monkey, is one of the financial signs of the Chinese zodiac.

This is ongoing, but it was a scary year financially. Many media pieces we saw forecast dire warnings of a world financial collapse, which did not come to pass. People in the US especially and worldwide are hoping that the Trump administration will turn the American economy around and reset the financial structure. We'll get to that more in a bit, but I would have to say in the long run, don't expect it from Trump. It will come from other initiatives. Expect the reverse from Trump. We saw a rally in the stock market with Trump's election, but that is deceptive in terms of indicating that the economy turning around. The rally was based upon the hopes of financial players for further deregulation of the markets under Trump. The current financial structure in the US and many world economies is a house of cards, based upon the financialization² of markets, which took place in the US after the dollar was removed from the gold standard in the early '70s under Nixon's watch.³ This was seized upon by Clinton and Blair in the 90's as part of their 'Third Way' economics,⁴ which has seen steady monopolization by corporations, financial deregulation, manipulation of our fiat currencies (talk about 'alternative facts' – our money is no longer based in concrete terms), globalization, and so forth. This is set to change, beginning this year.

- **Major advances in transport brought to reality.** We already see attempts at this with reusable rockets, high-speed trains (Hyperloop, for example), the Panama Canal expansion, autonomous vehicle technology, etc. We can also expect major advances in the architecture of computer chips and thus everything computational, as well as with communications systems.

There were not any big advances in these areas, but work is ongoing. There has been increased interest in getting humans to Mars, as we saw in 2016, and work in that area has focused on special ion thrusters to do the job.⁵ SpaceX was finally able to successfully land its booster rocket without significant damage, which will eventually usher in a cheaper space flight and orbital missions.⁶ Elon Musk's hyperloop system is coming closer to reality, which would have speeds of up to 760 mph/1200 kph, and which is planned for development in Dubai.⁷ We are also seeing hoverboards and drones becoming more omnipresent, and there is set to be a revolution in the transport industry once the air transport regulations in various countries are amended to allow drone transport of goods through the air.

- **I don't like to say it, but we may likely see an event or events that wake the greater majority of people up to the environmental dangers that face us. I would expect this to be a weather-related event, or perhaps an earthquake.**

Thankfully, there was not any one big event. There *were* many large events, but relatively few deaths in comparison to other years. We saw flooding above the usual in South Australia, Europe, Houston, Maryland, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Johannesburg, Sao Paolo, the Philippines. Hurricane Matthew which struck Haiti hard, was the deadliest storm on record for the year. As for earthquakes, Italy had the dubious distinction of the second-highest death toll for earthquakes in 2016, with Ecuador coming in first. In comparison, it was a mild year for serious earthquakes, even though there were around 17,000 significant earthquakes in 2016, out of the several million that occur each year. And no, the number of earthquakes is not increasing, nor their severity.⁸

With these points in mind, and moving on to the present year, for the Rooster of Solitude Years (1717, 1777, 1837, 1897, 1957), the trends in those years were as follows:

- public outrage over treatment of minorities
- crises in the Middle East
- expulsion of Western powers from o/s colonies
- advances in racial equality and resulting racial tensions from backlash
- periods of economic downturns (the Rooster is very connected with economics)
- economic reforms in Europe
- agreements between European powers and Russia
- nuclear accidents
- advances in space travel and explorations (the first satellite, Sputnik, was launched in 1957)

As for these individual topics, going from top to bottom with the bullet points, we already see the focus on immigration and the outrage in the US and worldwide over Trump's travel bans. Tensions will continue in Europe over similar sentiments toward refugees and immigrants as populist movements seek to gain power in Europe. This will be ongoing. There will be further crises in the Middle East, with increased tensions due to Trump's policies, his plans to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, which would probably wreck any hopes of an Israeli-Palestinian peace if done recklessly, as well as the age-old conflicts between Muslim sects, and then the possible coordinated actions between the US and Russia against Daesh and other groups branded as terrorist organizations by Western powers.

As for the expulsion of Western powers from overseas colonies, the colonial age that we saw 100 years ago is finished. Instead, what we see now are corporate interests that have controlling influences in foreign governments, as well as the numerous US military bases the world over. Sentiment against the military bases have been growing in recent years, as have growing sentiments rising against foreign influence in governments. Duterte's movement away from the US in the Philippines in terms of military cooperation is one such example, as he reaches a hand out to Russia,⁹ and then there is the ongoing opposition to companies such as Monsanto (GMO crops) in European countries, and then Hungary's and Montenegro's opening of investigations in the NGOs funded by George Soros, for example.¹⁰

As for advances in racial equality, we'll have to see how this unfolds. Race relations in the US received copious media attention last year with the Black Lives Matter movement, for example, and race relations have always been a problem.¹¹ And then there were reported racist-related attacks in the UK after the Brexit vote. Europe has deep-seated problems with racism, too, little as Europeans would admit it. With rising populist sentiments in the West, these sorts of things will only increase. And then there is the increasing militarization of policing in the US and abroad, which looks to further increase under Trump. Blacks in the US expect race relations to be worse under Trump, and they may well be. But, racial tensions have also been catalysts for advances in race relations, as we

saw with the Civil Rights movement in the ‘50s and ‘60s in the US. We can probably expect increases in racial tensions worldwide, but we can also expect that these will eventually lead to legislation that will promote better relations. There is quite a bit of work to do, still, but compared to what we had 50 years ago, we have made good progress, too. There will always be backlash when new legislation is enacted, and this is to be expected.

As for economic downturns, readers might rightly say that we are in an upward swing in the markets, especially with the stock rally after Trump’s election. But history has shown that Rooster years typically do not bode well for financial markets, particularly in the US.¹² A downturn this year is not difficult to see, and these normally start after the mid-year. We are in a stock market bubble mentality at the moment,¹³ riding on optimism of a Trump business-friendly atmosphere. That does not take the Congress into account, though, and opposition to his plans, nor for ill-founded plans or international relations. However, as in the case of race relations, difficult times tend to produce changes in the system.

As for financial reforms in Europe, 1957 saw the creation of the European Economic Community with the Treaty of Rome. The EEC is a Rooster of Solitude organization. We can probably look for the major reforms this year in Europe to come from Italy to begin, which is in the throes of a banking crisis.¹⁴ This will force reforms in the Eurozone, because Italy is one of the ‘big three’, along with France and Germany, and Italy will not be held under thumb like Greece or Spain, for example. Europe has been suffering under austerity measures since the 2008 financial crisis and the central banking system in Europe is the cause, along with the central bureaucratic policies of the EU, due for a breakup and reforms. I would not look for a breakup of the EU, but there will be changes definitely starting this year, as there are elections this year in many European countries and we could see other ‘Trump’ and ‘Brexit’-like votes in European elections. Such events will force a re-think of EU policies and Eurozone policies.

Then, there are Russia-European relations. If the US eventually drops or relaxes sanctions on Russia – not everyone in Russia wants that to happen – then the door will open for further European dealings with Russia. The world has been brought to the brink of a major war in Europe again with the NATO buildup along the Russian border and fears in the eastern European states about being overrun by Russia due to the Ukraine incident and Crimea. We can probably expect tensions to gradually cool this year. What the European nations do not realize is that ramping up tensions on the borders of Russia only incites them to be overrun by Russia if there were to be the outbreak of major fighting. There is no real justification for the buildup. Russia reacted to Ukraine, just as the US reacted to Cuba in the early ‘60s. The US still holds on to the a little eastern corner of Cuba, with no signs of letting it go. Do we expect Russia to give back Crimea? Otherwise, Russia has shown no real aggression toward European powers. Yes, it is rising in influence, but influence does not necessarily mean ‘aggression’. There is quite a bit of hyperbole and hypocrisy toward Russia in the West. We need a saner and more enlightened view. It doesn’t mean we have to be the best of friends with Russia, but there does need to be at least a lessening of tensions and a greater understanding between the two to avoid a disaster. And this brings us to nuclear accidents.

In the last Rooster of Solitude year (1957), we had some significant events around nuclear energy and weaponry. The first nuclear submarine, *Nautilus*, was launched, Eisenhower announced a two-year suspension of nuclear testing and the International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEA) was founded. Those were arguably the good points for that year. But then, there was the Kyshtym disaster¹⁵ in the USSR, which was the third-worst nuclear disaster on record, and then the Windscale fire¹⁶ in Great Britain, which was the worst nuclear accident in Britain’s history. Both of those accidents were at nuclear processing plants that were involved in bomb-making, and both were involved in the production of plutonium. And then there is a favorite ‘broken arrow’¹⁷ story and one of the most famous, which was the accidental dropping of a giant Mark 17 hydrogen bomb near the Kirtland Air Force base in New Mexico. It was a massive thing – eight meters (about 25

feet) long, with a yield of about ten megatons. Thankfully, the plutonium triggers were not installed, but the compression explosives went off on impact, made a 3.5 meter (12 ft) deep crater, which spread radioactive material over a square mile. A broken arrow incident is when there is a nuclear accident that does not cause a war. In fact, there were three other broken arrow incidents in the US around that time, too. We'll keep our fingers crossed that nothing like those events happen this year.

And finally, there are advances in space travel. It is hard to say what we will see in that regard, as such advances are being made all the time. Sputnik was launched in 1957, which caused real alarm for the Pentagon and sped up the space race as a result. But, I for one look forward to such advances in space, being a big fan of space myself. With these preceding points at hand, then, we need to look at the more troublesome and big story of the year in brief – Trump and the US – as happenings there will have large carry-on effects for the rest of the globe.

To begin with what we are likely to see over the next months, there are four eclipses this year, two of them in February, and all of them are activated by Mars from mid-August through mid-September. The Chinese placed great stock in eclipses and tracked them very carefully. Much of the immediate attention of the world is focused upon the US at the moment with good reason, as the Trump administration seeks to implement its policies through its honeymoon period before Congress has to pass legislation on them, policies which are causing not a small amount of consternation worldwide. Quite a bit of instability will be brought via these eclipses, and we are seeing the Mars activation of a powerful eclipse right now, as we see by the restive nature of the US and other parts of the globe. We will have a further look at these eclipses in the next letter and what they will mean, but as a heads-up, they will strongly affect the US and Donald Trump. Moving on, here's what the Chinese astrology has to say:

The Fire Rooster, otherwise known as 'The Rooster of Solitude', can be a cantankerous character when it applies to a human being. It marks a person who should keep to themselves, in a way, and seek advice from a wide variety of sources. In the case of a year, it indicates a polemical year and one that is prone to many accidents. The Rooster is known for its sometimes irascible nature anyway, and when the year is marked by the Rooster of Solitude, then we see this borne out in world affairs. It marks difficult years for people in leadership roles, and it calls for distancing oneself from yes-men if there is to be any success in affairs of state. It is also a warning against gossips and scandals that can come about through misinformation or from people's emotions being stirred in the wrong direction. We can already see how this will apply to the US, and we will look at that more directly, but these key ideas apply to the entire world. Hence, we get the idea of 'solitude', because leaders in this year must trust their own inner guidance over that of people who only agree with everything that comes out of their mouths. However, there is also the admonition to be more inclusive of diverse opinions, outside of one's immediate circle of influence. World leaders like Donald Trump will be tested strongly by these principles in 2017, as he has gathered people loyal to him in his immediate inner circle, rather than reaching out for more diversity in his cabinet choices..

The Trump presidency was inaugurated on 20 Jan 17 at exactly noon in Washington, DC. It is quite interesting from the perspective of Chinese astrology for several reasons. Firstly, almost all US administrations since they started having inaugurations on the 20th of January have what is known as a 'Rob Wealth' relation between the Year Pillars of the year and that of

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 4 yin fire	Stem: 8 yin metal	Stem: 3 Yang Fire
Branch: VII Fire Horse <i>Travelling Horse</i>	Branch: VIII Earth Sheep <i>Lost Sheep</i>	Branch: II Earth Ox <i>Ox on the Road</i>	Branch: IX Metal Monkey <i>Mountain Monkey</i>
Combined Water <i>The River Han</i> (Milky Way)	Combined Water <i>The River Han</i> (Milky Way)	Combined Earth <i>Earthen Walls</i>	Combined Fire <i>Foothill Fire</i>

the incoming administration. The only time the two are the same is when the new year starts after Feb 4. Rob Wealth is not quite what the name of the relation implies, but in the case of the Trump administration, it is exactly what the name implies. Rob Wealth simply means that power and resources have to be shared, meaning that the incoming administration has to compromise with the prevailing conditions of the world, as represented by the year. The Trump administration continues the Mountain Monkey tradition that was in effect for 2016. It implies a manipulative, scheming influence in its lower manifestation, which is largely what we saw with the elections, but on both sides of the political aisle. And that scheming influence is what we see now with the present administration, which has some interesting twists.

The element counts in the Four Pillars of the administration chart show Fire being overly strong with a count of five out of twelve, and with Earth as the next-strongest with a count of three. Wood, representing creativity and expansion, is absent. The indication is for an extravagant, out-of-control government, without a great deal of creativity or progressive outlook, one that is pretty well centered on itself, but very solid and fixed in its intentions. Of interest is that it lacks resources to feed it, which the Wood would provide, which means that it must look outside itself for those resources. We see this, for instance, in Trump's insistence that jobs must come back to US shores, or that value added taxes must be paid on incoming goods, as we are seeing with his attitude toward Mexico, proposing a 20% VAT on Mexican-produced goods coming to the US. This is supposed to pay for his wall. We'll see how that goes. Tax cuts, a political favorite, also do not help.

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 6 yin earth	Stem: 6 yin earth	Stem: 1 Yang Wood	Stem: 3 Yang Fire
Branch: VI Fire Snake <i>Snake of Happiness</i>	Branch: VIII Earth Sheep <i>Sheep in Pasture</i>	Branch: VII Fire Horse <i>Horse in the Clouds</i>	Branch: XI Earth Dog <i>Sleeping Dog</i>
Combined Wood <i>Forest Wood</i>	Combined Fire <i>Heavenly Fire</i>	Combined Metal <i>Excavated Metal</i>	Combined Earth <i>Rooftop Slates</i>

Donald Trump has a similar elemental makeup in his Four Pillars (left) in that Fire is strong with a count of four, and Earth is strongest with a count of five. This shows his charisma, but it also makes him quite stubborn and circumspect (cautious and guarded) in his dealings, with the overly strong Earth. He completely lacks Water, which belies his communication skills

and shows his lack of empathy. In reality, a lack of Water is an indication of a secretive, tentative nature, and this is reinforced by Metal being weak, with only a count of one out of twelve. There is little Metal to feed the Water element. Weak Metal tends to make a person indecisive and vacillating. Metal is a 'business' element, meaning it is found in the charts of people who are good with finance and in executive positions. That Metal is found only in his Month Pillar, which represents his birth family, and he inherited his initial wealth. We find the Horse as the Month Pillar, too, showing the strong yang influence of his father and the emphasis in his childhood upon personal toughness, winning and his competitive and combative style. The Yang Wood also completely controlled and shaped his outlook on life, too. Yang Wood also represents trees, especially tall trees, witness his love of tall buildings, large projects and the image he likes to project of being larger-than-life.

In short, looking simply at the elements we see a person who talks a good story and can draw people in, but who lacks the skills to see things through to successful conclusions – a person who is good at making deals, but terrible at the day-to-day running of a business – or a government – which requires a firm outlook, focus and staying power, witness his numerous bankruptcies. In addition, his 'money element' (Water) is completely lacking, meaning he has to bring it in from outside resources. He depends on other people for that, as it is not within his makeup. Trump is an Earth Sheep (Sheep in the Pasture) in his Day Pillar, so his Day Master is Yin Earth. However, the

Earth Sheep is one of the Six Elegant Day Masters¹⁸ and a Fortune Noble Star¹⁹, meaning he has been able to achieve fame and which has removed financial worry. We don't have the space to go into all the influences here, as this is more about the year and the administration, but he has other influences which indicate his legal troubles, among other things. And, the Sheep can be a very polarizing and opinionated influence by itself, or when they feel they have been backed into a corner. It should also be noted that the current administration is a Fire Sheep in the Day Pillar, which indicates the leader. The Fire Sheep is called the 'Lost Sheep', meaning that resources are sparse and peril looms, as well that only hard work will win the day. What does all this mean, though, with regard to the year as it unfolds? The indications already do not bode well.

If all this sounds negative about Trump, all one needs to do is to study the man's life.²⁰ The astrology simply indicates what is there already. As for the immediate future, he will be OK through the honeymoon period (traditionally, the first 100 days in office) and then things will begin to turn. In April his progressed Day Pillar enters what is called the 'Seven Killing' relationship with his Day Pillar for three months – throughout the high point of the subjective year. Seven Killing, as the name suggests, is one of the death indicators in BaZi, or Four Pillars. It is never an easy influence. In this instance it indicates more a death of Trump's agendas, or setbacks. He is already beginning to alienate his voter base, there are growing suspicions about his relationship with Vladimir Putin, about which he is being secretive, and he has yet to release his tax returns, etc. This Seven Killing is coming out of a Direct Wealth phase, which is what saw him into the White House. The Seven Killing can indicate many things – perhaps an illness, a setback in his family life somewhere, a litigious matter or simply frustrating situations that do not permit him to do much. It could also be a person or a movement that becomes like a worst nightmare scenario, like someone leaking his tax returns. With his lack of Water, he fears exposure. Again, we'll have to wait and see.

The Trump administration has the I Ching hexagram 'Ornamentation' as its ruler, which indicates that attention needs to be paid to small matters. It also points to one (if it applies to a person) who is ostentatious on the surface, and that any actions should be quiet and firm. Actions to the contrary will tend to bring alienation from people and a loss of face. The administration has already had to back down from several executive orders and there have been no bills introduced into Congress yet from the Trump team. It is expected that there will be tough fights in Congress over many of Trump's proposed legislations, as well as mounting public pressure. And then, there is Trump's right-hand man, Steve Bannon, who is seen more and more to be the one calling the shots for Trump. We already begin to see the truth about this administration: Trump is the front man for another agenda, one that is more in line with Steve Bannon's thinking, since Trump does not seem to have any clear or fixed policy.

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Unknown	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 10 yin water	Stem: 10 yin water
Steve Bannon 27 Nov 1953 Norfolk, VA	Branch: VII Fire Horse <i>Way Horse</i>	Branch: XII Water Pig <i>Pig in the Forest</i>	Branch: VI Fire Snake <i>Snake in the Field</i>
	Combined Wood <i>Pliant Wood</i>	Combined Water <i>Ocean Water</i>	Combined Water <i>Flowing Water</i>

Steve Bannon's birth hour is not known, but we can already glean quite a bit from the other three Pillars in his astrology. He is a Water Horse in his Day Pillar, marking him as a formidable communicator and opponent in any ideological debate. In fact, Water is his strongest element, which is in his three known Master placements, which also marks him as the

intellect in the Trump team, and he has Fire as the second element, giving him a certain charisma, and he has certainly captured the attention of the far right. This year thus marks a 'Peach Blossom' year for him, too, making him flavor of the month in DC and with the far right. It is he who is driving administration policy. For all the focus that there has been on Trump, Bannon has been

ignored in comparison until recently. He is a self-described ‘Leninist’²¹ – interesting with regard to Russia – whose main goal is to destroy the state.²² Bannon’s stated aim is to bring down the leadership of the Republican Party, the Democrats and the traditional conservative (mainstream) press. He is a strong advocate for the Tea Party. With concern to the press, Bannon’s strategy is the reason we have seen much of the focus on the press in Trump’s campaign and presidency thus far and the attempts made to discredit it. That sort of thing has a way of backfiring, though, and we will get to why in a bit.

There is an interesting relationship between the Day Pillars of Trump and Bannon, remembering that the Day Pillar represents the self. The Sheep and the Horse – Trump and Bannon, respectively – form a natural pair, which is the ‘Pair of Gender’. Those two signs reflect the extremes of the gender relationship, with the Horse being the male archetype and the Sheep being the female archetype, the two extremes of yang and yin respectively. One might rightly think that the two together would form a balanced pair, but such is not the case. In this case, we have what is called the ‘Six Adversity’ pairing, with the Horse being the adverse pairing to the Sheep. In other words, Bannon brings adversity to Trump through his ‘horsiness’ and more combative and organized style, whereas Trump is very comfortable with going off the cuff and winging things. Six Adversity in a natal chart gives a lifetime of difficulties, worries and hardships, keeping in mind Trump is still in the flush of his victory and he is riding high, but it is not going to last.

The elemental relationship between Trump and Bannon is even more revealing. Water is the ‘money element’ of Earth, meaning that Bannon gives Trump the Water element he so badly needs in his chart. It was Bannon’s strategy that took Trump to the White House, that led him to success. In this case, it may also be the thing that causes an eventual downfall. The particular element combination we see here is called ‘Direct Officer’. Whereas Yang Earth normally controls Yin Water and creates wealth, we have the opposite polarities here. Yin Earth to Yang Water creates a situation of great stubbornness, eventually, take-it-or-leave-it attitudes and ultimatums. So, what we see is a relationship that on the surface appears very attractive and utilitarian to both men, giving them both a vehicle they would normally lack, but in the end it will cause troubles due to frictions, because both men can be rather obstinate, and in some ways they are opposites. Trump in this case is the receptive party and he has followed Bannon’s advice quite strongly, but given Trump’s history that can change rather suddenly if things start to go against Trump.

But there is something else going on in the US now that is not really being addressed as it should be, and this goes to Bannon’s ideology and strategy.²³ While we might think that what we are seeing are amateurish attempts at governance by an inexperienced cabinet and president, what is probably actually going on is a test of the waters, as it were, to see how far their platform can be enforced or put forward,²⁴ while at the same time the Republicans in Congress are making their own opportunistic grabs at influence while the public is distracted or focused on the Muslim ban.²⁵ It is not simple ineptitude that has seen Trump place Bannon on the National Security Council. This is calculated, because it puts information and influence in the hands of Trump’s chief strategist. It is also another example of Trump surrounding himself with yes-men.²⁶

What we have in the administration now are two clearly-emerging lines – one on the Trump side, which is anti-establishment and which the Trump supporters voted for, and the other which is hardline, farther right and mainstream in its ideology, which is represented in Mike Pence, and which the majority of Americans reject. And a battle between the two will eventuate, likely beginning with the eclipse activations noted previously and with Trump’s Seven Killing influence in April. There is probably little doubt that before Trump’s term in office is over we will see instead a ‘President Pence’, a return to a strong anti-Russia stance, the ax falling on the social gains made in the Roosevelt era and beyond, and a raft of ‘religious freedom’ legislation coming before Congress – unless Trump manages to hold out until the midterm elections in 2018. The best outlook for the majority of Americans’ interests would be for the various progressive grassroots movements to take

a firm hold, for the Democrats to re-embrace their working-class roots and throw off the ‘Third Way’ ideological debacle that cost them this election,²⁷ and then for the midterm elections to sweep the Congress with a raft of fresh representatives and senators. In many ways, this presidency is what was needed to motivate the American public to awaken to its truer values and to begin to reclaim their right to self-governance. The soul shines through in times of crisis, and we are in one now.

As for the rest of the world, they watch us Americans closely and in disbelief of what they are seeing many times, but there are gifts in all this if we can realize them. To start, we are seeing the beginning of the end of globalism. NAFTA and the TPP are on the rocks now. That will cause another set of interim problems and probably greatly disadvantage Mexico in the short term, but it will serve to tend to keep jobs in America. The latter in and of itself will cause problems, too, little as people may realize it. Keeping jobs in the country might sound like a great idea, but the unwanted side effect of that is that prices will go up, value-added taxes will cut into people’s retirement accounts and certain sectors of the country’s workforce will actually be disadvantaged, such as farmers. I’ll give you a small example.

As it is, we Americans enjoy a very enviable position in the world of retail shopping. Goods are cheap, plentiful and there is a very wide selection from which to choose. I know many people who, when they travel to the US, load up on things that would be markedly more expensive at home, or even unavailable. I recently tried to buy some jeans on Amazon.it (here in Italy), but they didn’t have my size and they were twice the cost from Amazon in the US. So, I ordered from the US, had them shipped to my family, and had my family ship them over (Amazon US does not ship to Italy). Firstly, there was the cost of shipping, and then I had to pay import duty once they got here. Even with all that, they were still \$25 a pair cheaper doing it that way than buying them here. The difference in the costs? – value added taxes, or VAT. The EU has a standard VAT of 15% on anything coming into the EU, as a general rule. The US has no VAT, but that is what Trump is proposing, starting with Mexico. Be prepared to start paying more for all sorts of goods if he is able to implement that idea. And as for the retirement accounts?

Apple computer, for example, is one of the largest corporations in the world. Most of its production takes place in China. The software is done in the US. As it is, Apple enjoys a very high profit margin from this sort of practice, and Americans get much cheaper iPhones than the rest of the world. That would stop if Apple’s manufacturing came back to the US. Its profit margins would take a big hit due to labor costs, and guess what? – people’s retirement would take a sizeable hit. Retirement accounts are significantly based in the stock market, and if Apple had to bring its manufacturing back to US shores, Apple stock prices would drop sharply because of the reduced profit margins. The point of all this is that ‘bringing jobs back to America’ might be good grandstanding in politics, but people do not realize what it will mean in the long term. When Trump’s policies start to bite, if he can get them through Congress, people are going to notice in a big way because it will hit them in the pocket, and it’s the economy that wins and loses elections. Globalism has brought us cheap goods, but it has come at a price, too, except for the multinational corporations. Trump’s policies will raise the price of consumer goods, and people will not like it.

There is a point to this, and it is as follows: the Rooster is one of the financial signs of the Chinese zodiac. Rooster of Solitude years have been years where there has been reorganization of financial markets. This has been particularly true of Europe in the past and will likely be this time around, but it can apply anywhere globally. The financialization of the markets in the US especially has brought significant suffering to the American people and abroad through monopolies, through abuses from deregulated markets – which brought us the financial crash in 2008 – through the free trade agreements, through lobbying leverage in Congress and through obscene prices in the US for drugs, for instance. People know it needs to change. But financialization has also reduced the laborer in the West to a monetary value, something to be traded, and in reality it devalues humanity. We are not commodities, and unconsciously, or sometimes consciously, people realize what has happened. This

has been the appeal of Trump and Sanders, who campaigned on platforms to bring value back to the lives of the average citizen. But Trump is a false prophet, in that he is a corporatist, not a populist. All one needs to do to realize this is to look at his cabinet, which is filled with bosses and billionaires.²⁸ However, there are changes coming to the disastrous financial models that have been the guiding light of governments since Reagan, and especially in Obama's administration.

We had a great opportunity with the financial crash of 2008 to turn things around, and it was squandered. Instead of bailing out the citizen, the people who caused the mess in the first place were bailed out. Obama failed us on that one, and that gave rise to the Tea Party. Now we have another opportunity with Trump, and with the conflict he is stirring up, people who represent a more positive and sensible outlook have a door open to step forward. The one thing Trump is doing in a positive sense is causing both of the major parties in the US to reconnect with their voter base and to stand for positive values. It is not that those values are 'American' either. They are the values of simple human decency, respect and the valuing of each and every person, rather than things. We will see this in Europe more and more, too. It is this valuing of the person over finances that will finally bring the change that we seek, and if we could see it, that is what is happening now, however slowly, however unseen. The Rooster speaks to value in Chinese astrology – standing for one's best and demanding the finest in human nature. That will be the true gift of this year.

We will leave this discussion on a final point, and it is with regard to the press. Right now the press is under the foot of the race for ratings, hampered by managements' and stockholders' demands for profits. Here again, Trump has done us a service. In insulting the press, in casting them as lying, dishonest people, he will cause people in the industry to begin to go against the established order and do some true, investigative journalism, starting with Trump, and based upon unbiased reporting and carelessness of ratings. The Rooster has a grand connection with writing and journalism, and Trump has stepped on a hornet's nest with his remarks to the press, bigly. This will also begin to break up monopolies in the press, because journalists will go out on their own if they are unsupported by their organizations, and they will be recognized for what they do. If the press really wanted good ratings, some good, solid pieces on Trump and his administration will bring them those ratings, like it did with the Watergate scandal in the Nixon years. Nixon's administration starting in 1969 had the same signs in its Four Pillars as does Trump's, but with differing elements, but the main point is that his was a scheming administration as well, and it eventually brought Nixon down, via the press. The press, like the major parties, needs to reconnect with their guiding principles, and then we will begin to see a free press once again.

In closing, this year will belong to the people who can step up, with imagination firmly in tow, and create a new order out of the perceived chaos that many people believe to be on all sides. It will belong to the people who sense the opportunity, both in the good and especially in the difficult situations. In fact, the people who will build the future are those who can build upon that which has been swept clean. One cannot build upon land that has not been cleared, and a good brushfire has been needed for a while to clear out the overgrowth of the past. That is what this Rooster represents, because just as we saw last year, this year matches the Mountain Monkey in that, although fun can be a fine thing, it is now time to address more important matters. We are faced with forces and groups who, in a sense, have set a fire under us – and that can and should be a great motivator. So, seize the day! Become actively involved and make your voice heard, and we all have something of value to say. We will end with a quote from one of the world's most famous Muslims – speaking of Trump's Muslim ban – who had the Rooster as his Hour Pillar, representing his mind. It is something that perhaps all us would benefit by keeping in mind for this year:

"A rooster crows only when it sees the light. Put him in the dark and he'll never crow. I have seen the light and I'm crowing."²⁹

Muhammad Ali

See you all with the Aquarius letter. Blessings,
Malvin
2 Feb 17

These letters are sent as a service. If you wish to be added to or deleted from the mailing list, let me know. If you feel inspired, feel free to send them off to others, but do so without alteration or charge.

¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-38421026>

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financialization>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nixon_shock

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Way

⁵ <https://phys.org/news/2016-02-hall-thruster-contender-humans-mars.html>

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Falcon_9_and_Falcon_Heavy_launches#First_landings_on_drone_ship

⁷ <http://www.mirror.co.uk/tech/dubais-futuristic-hyperloop-system-moves-9303056>

⁸ <https://ds.iris.edu/ds/nodes/dmc/kb/questions/1/is-the-number-of-earthquakes-increasing/>

⁹ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/philippines-leader-rodrigo-duterte-new-world-order-russia-china-un-icc/>

¹⁰ <http://www.rferl.org/a/george-soros-macedonia-witch-hunt/28243738.html> and

<http://hungarianspectrum.org/2016/05/27/the-anti-george-soros-campaign-intensifies-in-hungary/> and

<http://dailycaller.com/2017/01/10/hungary-promises-crackdown-on-george-soros-groups-after-trump-victory/>

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Lives_Matter

¹² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_recessions_in_the_United_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>List_of_recessions_in_the_United_States)

¹³ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/johntobey/2016/12/12/trump-stock-market-now-aided-by-bubble-mentality/#11730ead617a>

¹⁴ <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-12-23/the-opportunity-in-italy-s-banking-crisis>

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyshtym_disaster

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windscale_fire

¹⁷ <https://listverse.com/2014/11/03/10-times-the-military-accidentally-dropped-nuclear-bombs/>

¹⁸ The Six Elegant Day Masters are: Fire Horse, Fire Sheep, Earth Rat, Earth Ox, Earth Horse, Earth Sheep

¹⁹ The Fortune Noble Stars are: Wood Tiger, Wood Ox, Wood Pig, Fire Rat, Fire Dog, Fire Rooster, Earth Monkey, Earth Sheep, Metal Snake, Metal Snake, Water Dragon, Water Rabbit

²⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uvdHBWH7rU&t=31s>

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leninism#Philosophic_successors

²² <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/08/22/steve-bannon-trump-s-top-guy-told-me-he-was-a-leninist.html>

²³ https://www.buzzfeed.com/lesterfeder/this-is-how-steve-bannon-sees-the-entire-world?utm_term=.itzqPm0AE#.fkXxa1zrq

²⁴ <https://medium.com/@jakefuentes/the-immigration-ban-is-a-headfake-and-were-falling-for-it-b8910e78f0c5#.2m897jhq>

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gW1tNtccO1g&t=821s>

²⁶ https://www.buzzfeed.com/lesterfeder/this-is-how-steve-bannon-sees-the-entire-world?utm_term=.itzqPm0AE#.fkXxa1zrq

²⁷ https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/01/12/democrats-cant-win-until-they-recognize-how-bad-obamas-financial-policies-were/?utm_term=.1c405558a4e9

²⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQUkaEVe7II>

²⁹ <https://audioboom.com/posts/4684414-the-spiritual-journey-of-muhammad-ali>