

THE CHINESE NEW YEAR LETTER THE YEAR OF THE WOOD DRAGON

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Gong Hey Fat Choy Everyone!

And welcome to the Year of the Wood Dragon – the ‘Dragon in the Whirlpool’. This Dragon is also known as the Green Dragon. And to clarify, this is a Yang year, as Dragons are always Yang. Green is the color of Wood in the Chinese [Five Element system](#), signifying new growth. The previous year of the Dragon was in 2012, the year the world was supposed to end, if you remember, with all sorts of dire predictions from the tin-foil crowd. Well, we are all still here (those of us who have not already passed on to the Heavenly Fields) and given the nature of this particular Dragon, important issues will be addressed this year, with pointed questions to be asked. That will spur a fresh outlook, leading us to a more expansive future. This is a ‘blind year’, meaning the lunar year starts after the *li chun* (first day of spring in the Chinese solar calendar) and ends before the *li chun* in 2025. ‘Blind years’ denote uncertainty as to the direction the year is to take, which is not difficult to see, given our current world situation. But with these preliminary remarks in mind we may as well get straight to the point of what this year actually will entail.

The motto for the Wood Dragon is as follows:

Be prepared. Meeting important people can bring uncomfortable questions. It is important to be composed and to show confidence.

But as the result, this year will bring:

Revelation, Understanding and the Illumination of difficulties

The preceding bolded text is taken from Derek Walters’ landmark books on Chinese astrology for the Western readership. He states the above in another matter in one of his books:

“Soon there will be an opportunity to meet with a person of great authority. It will not be an easy meeting; many unexpected questions will be asked, and it is important not to falter or show nervousness. If the preparation is sound, the result will be successful.”¹

Further, for the Combined Element, which is Candle Flame, he has the following:

“The lamplight provides illumination when the hours are dark. It is a sign of revelation and understanding, and elucidation difficulties.”²

The Four Pillars chart for the lunar New Year is below, for reference:

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 4 yin fire	Stem: 1 Yang Wood	Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 1 Yang Wood
Branch: IV Wood Rabbit <i>Rabbit Dreaming of the Moon</i>	Branch: V Earth Dragon <i>Dragon in the Whirlpool</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger in the Forest</i>	Branch: V Earth Dragon <i>Dragon in the Whirlpool</i>
Combined Fire <i>Fiery Furnace</i>	Combined Fire <i>Lamplight</i>	Combined Fire <i>Fiery Furnace</i>	Combined Fire <i>Lamplight</i>

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With the passing of the Black Rabbit Year and the darkness we have seen especially since October, we could use a little more optimism, as indicated in the mottos above. The reason for the optimism is indicated in the Stem for the Year Pillar, the Wood Element. Wood is governed by the Wood Planet, Jupiter, with the 'need to be prepared' indicated by the Branch, which is the Animal Sign, the Dragon in this case. The Dragon indicates the important people and the need to show confidence, from the motto. The Wood Planet has the following transformational associations, since it transmits the Wood Element:

Wood is connected with the soul, the sight, with the eyes, with growth and creation. Its associated organs are the liver and the gallbladder. The color is green, as in the new shoots of leaves with the coming of spring. It rules the eastern direction and is associated with the wind. Wood is avant-garde because it brings in the new. It is the element associated with imagination. It tends toward the rustic taste and casual dress. It is associated with how people bear (comport) themselves. Overall, Wood is associated with growth, its main keyword. Anger harms the Wood Element. It is associated with the electrical trades. Its tendency is to be inventive, especially when it comes to all manner of electrical and electronic phenomena and apparatus. In the extreme, Wood can be too particular, boorish and speak too much. But overall, this is a far more expressive and expansive transformation than the secretive Water Element from the last two years.

Instead of going into the interpretation of the Four Pillars, this year we will be looking into something closer to our hearts, the Dragon itself. You can look into [the past Chinese New Year's letters on this site](#) to get an idea of what the interpretation of the Four Pillars would entail. However, given the nature of world events and the crying need for resolution of the two major conflicts in the world, we want to get a handle on what the Dragon actually represents. And as it turns out, instead of representing an animal, albeit mystical, the result is actually quite surprising. So, from here we move on to our consideration of the Dragon.

Dragons, East and West: Across the world, dragons are known as mythical creatures, endowed with magical powers. In the West they tend to be portrayed as malevolent, breathing fire and wreaking destruction on communities who fail to pay tribute or who offend the spirit of the dragon in some way. And there is usually some poor sod (a.k.a. a dashing prince/handsome hero/brave

knight) who is tasked with killing this poor creature, symbolically representing a rite of passage (slaying one's demons to emerge victorious, saving communities or some fair damsel, etc., etc.). This caricature of dragons is more likely one of the unfortunate results of early Christian leaders, who sought to wipe away the legacy of pagan beliefs, with the emphases of dragons living in underground layers, often with a hellish backdrop. But it is not all dystopia, doom and terror with dragons in modern Western portrayals of them. [Films with dragons in them run the gamut](#) from the Plutonian heroic quest of [Dragonslayer](#) (Burning water!, and one of my faves) to the magical children's fantasy-fest of [NeverEnding Story](#) (Awww....). True to our Western either-or tendency, dragons represent evils to be overcome or forces to be befriended. There is always a hero's quest involved. In the East, dragons represent quite a different culture – one that comes from a far-distant and forgotten past. But first we have a little background.

The Imperial Dragon: In Chinese astrology the type of Dragon usually represented is called the Imperial Dragon. It is actually a composite creature, being composed of nine different animals. In China this Dragon is called *Lung*, and is most revered. (Hereafter *Lung* is capitalized and italicized to distinguish these dragons from the English word for a respiratory organ) The *Lung* is distinctly the Imperial symbol of ancient China and of the Chinese Emperor. These days the *Lung* is the Chinese state animal, in the same vein as the American eagle and the Russian bear. The nine animals represented in *Lung* are the head of the camel (with a pearl on his forehead, with a long beard and with a sharp sword as a tongue.), for starters. On each side of his mouth are whiskers, and a beard hangs under his chin where bright pearls are placed. Its breath proceeds from the mouth like a cloud; it changes into water or fire; his voice is like the jingling of copper pans. Aside from the head, this *Lung* has the horns of a deer, the eyes of a rabbit, the ears of a cow (It cannot hear, which is the reason deaf persons are called *lung* in China), the neck of a snake, the belly of a frog, the scales of the carp (arranged in a ridge along its back, 81 in number; the scales on its throat lean toward the head and those on the head are disposed like the ridges in a chain of mountains), the legs and claws of a hawk and the palms of a tiger. Any deviation from this nomenclature reveals something other than an Imperial Dragon (*Lung*).

The Imperial *Lung* has five claws, denoting the head of state, his sons and princes of the first and second ranks. Dragons with fewer claws represent lower state officials. A four-clawed Dragon is the emblem of princes of third and fourth ranks. Princes of fifth-ranked and certain officials could use a serpent-like creature with five claws.

One will find many representations of dragons in Chinese symbolism. The four main divisions of dragons are the Celestial Dragon which guards and supports the mansions of the gods; the spiritual Dragon which causes the wind to blow and produces rain for the benefit of humanity; the dragon of the earth which marks out the courses of rivers and streams; and the dragon of hidden treasures which watches over the wealth concealed from humanity's eyes. There are other species of the *Lung* group. The *Lung* proper, or Imperial Dragon, is the most powerful and inhabits the sky. There is another type that is harmless and lives in the ocean. There is one which is scaly and resides in the marshes and mountain dens, having a small head and neck without horns, a breast of crimson color with striped green and yellow sides and back, with four legs, but is otherwise like a snake. And then there is a primitive form which is a beneficent creature and is said to exert a restraining influence against the sin of greed. It generally occurs in conventional form on ancient Chinese bronzes. But from here we get to the really interesting descriptions of Chinese dragons and their origins.

Mentioned above were the nine animal components of the Imperial *Lung*. According to legend there were nine offshoots of a certain *Lung* which gave rise to nine distinct offshoots and they are respectively distinguished by special characteristics. There is one type carved on the tops of bells and gongs reflecting its habit of crying out loudly when attacked by its archenemy, the whale. There is a type carved on the screws of fiddles for his taste for music. There is a type carved on the top of stone tablets as it was fond of literature. This one is largely used as a pedestal for tombstones. It is a

river god and is endowed with supernatural strength. There is another type carved at the bottom of stone monuments, as it supports heavy weights. There is a type carved on the eaves of temples reflecting its liking for danger. There is a type carved on the beams of bridges owing to its fondness for water. It was placed on the roofs of buildings to keep off fire. This one has the figure of a fish with uplifted tail. There is a type carved on the pedestal of the Buddha, known for its propensity for resting. It is identified with the symbolic lion. There is a type carved on sword hilts because of its lust after slaughter. And finally, there is a type carved on prison gates, for it likes litigation, quarreling and use of its energy and strength, being very fierce. This one is a scaly beast with one horn. But there is more, and this is where we come to forgotten or hidden history:

Dragons R Us: The Imperial *Lung* is associated with the ‘9 *Lungs* motif’, which is embroidered on Emperors’ robes, as well as being cast into the wall screens in the Imperial Palace.³ Why nine, and not 7 or 10 or some other number? The number 9 was associated with the 9 Emperor Gods – the long-lived first human sovereigns who lived in antediluvian times (before the ‘floods’ that sank Atlantis). These were the ancient Chinese recounting and equivalent of the 9 Biblical patriarchs who lived before the floods. Atlantis was actually sunk due to volcanic action and catastrophic shifts in the Earth’s crust, causing Atlantis to sink, while other continents rose. The ancient word *Lung* actually denotes a priest-king. So, the Emperor in ancient China was not only a ruler, but he was also an officiating priest. But it gets even stranger, or perhaps not. In the etymology of the old oracle bone script of ancient China, the character for *Lung* actually represents a human, also showing a halo around the head. This was no ordinary person. This was a person connected to the divine.

Dragons in esoteric literature have always been associated with wisdom, never with malevolence. In the East there is always something of the divine associated with dragons. The *Lung* in particular was regarded as a beneficent spirit of the moist Yang principal, dwelling either in the clouds or in the waters. There were five sorts of *Lung*: heavenly, which guarded the mansions of the gods; spiritual which control winds and rains and would only accidentally cause flooding; earthly which cleared rivers and deepened the seas; those who guard hidden treasure; and Imperial dragons marked by the five claws.⁴ These five types can be seen to translate directly into the Dragons with their associated Elements in Chinese astrology. Thus, in Chinese astrology there are five types of Dragons, each associated with one of the Five Elements. Those Dragons, with their most recent years, are as follows:

- **Wood Dragon** (1964): heavenly. This is [the heraldic Dragon](#), presiding over the eastern celestial direction and the first seven *Xiu* (of the 28 lunar mansions).
- **Fire Dragon** (1976): spiritual
- **Earth Dragon** (1988): earthly
- **Metal Dragon** (2000): hidden treasure
- **Water Dragon** (2012): Imperial.⁵ In ancient China water was life itself. The Emperor stood as the intermediary between the gods and the people, reflecting the activity of Mercury, the water planet. He was the communicator of the divine intent, presiding over the rituals and acting as the priest.

The associations of each Dragon with its element and quality are my own. No doubt there would be other associations. Hidden treasures, for instance, were kept under water and guarded by Imperial Dragons. And we remember, too, that there are nine varieties of *Lung* associated with the Imperial Dragon. Metal and hidden treasures point to the Metal Element being associated with jewellery and precious metals.

The occult angle: Speaking of other associations with Dragons in Chinese mythology and occultism, we have this from Blavatsky, speaking of Dragons and emperors:

“Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” The Chinese, one of the oldest nations of our Fifth Race, made of it the emblem of their Emperors, who are thus the degenerate

successors of the “Serpents” or Initiates, who ruled the early races of the Fifth Humanity. The Emperor’s throne is the “Dragon’s Seat,” and his dresses of State are embroidered with the likeness of the Dragon. **The aphorisms in the oldest books of China, moreover, say plainly that the “Dragon” is a human, albeit divine, Being.** Speaking of the “Yellow Dragon,” the chief of the others, the Twan-ying-t’u, says: “His wisdom and virtue are unfathomable...he does not go in company and does not live in herds (he is an ascetic). He wanders in the wilds beyond the heavens. He goes and comes, fulfilling the decree (Karma); at the proper seasons if there is perfection he comes forth, if not he remains (invisible).”...And Kon-fu-tyu is made to say by Lü-lan, “The Dragon feeds in the pure water of Wisdom and sports in the clear waters of Life.”⁶

Further, from the same page:

“China has also her tradition and the story of an island or continent, which it calls Ma-li-ga-si-ma...Kämpfer, in his “Japan” (Appendix, p. 13), gives the tradition: The island, owing to the iniquity of its giants, sinks to the bottom of the ocean, and Peiru-un, the king, the Chinese Noah, escapes alone with his family owing to a warning of the gods through two idols. It is that pious prince and his descendants who have peopled China. The Chinese traditions speak of the divine dynasties of Kings as much as those of any other nations.”

The astrological Dragon: With all this background then, what can we say about the astrological Dragon? The key word here would be **magic**, and for the esoterically inclined this would be the magic that happens when the soul moves upon the personality. There is always a touch of the exotic with the Dragon. There is also a kind of otherworldliness which sets it apart from the commonplace. Dragons are attracted to magic and spectacle, and they love the theatre, which is all about transformation and illusion. Our personal lives could be seen as theatre. We appear on the stage of life but for only a brief moment (compared to the long life of the soul), act our part and then return ‘backstage’ for ‘re-costuming’. Exceptionally gifted youngsters in China are known as ‘Dragon Children’ even though they may be born in other years. A ‘Dragon Lady’ is a formidable businesswoman, who will no doubt become a millionaire! Any career in any field that needs flamboyance, flair and knowledge of current trends will suit a Dragon’s special personality. Though Dragons may be associated with wealth and good fortune, their wealth is also capricious. People with the Dragon in their Four Pillars should be wary of speculation and gambling. Dragons in family life are likely to be exciting but hectic. Dragons need to be careful about making hasty decisions without thought of consequences. One of the characteristics of Dragons from the outside is that their dress sense is never conventional. What a Dragon wears today may not be the next year’s fashion.⁷

Dragon years are typically larked by financial capriciousness. They are also marked by the discovery of massive fraud and the collapse of financial institutions⁸ (2012 Greek debt crisis, the start of the Dotcom crash (2000) which was the result of speculation on internet start-ups, indictments are issued in the Iran-Contra affair and the [Keating Five](#) (1988), the Lockheed bribery scandal (1976), none to speak of in 1964). Discoveries are made in space exploration, which overturn accepted theories of the nature of space itself. Those are listed by year below.

In general, then, in the positive Dragons are determined and strong but they are not cunning or unlawful. They are lively and full of vitality. They follow their own judgment. One never tells the Dragon what to do. They are often admired, always highly intelligent and in the positive just and magnanimous. Dragons always buck tradition, which often follows in disagreements with their elders. They can be blunt and rough that regard. They can also be quite eccentric and egocentric. Dragons do best when they can bounce their ideas off of people who can play devil’s advocate and point out the weak points in a Dragon’s plans. The Dragon may not like it initially but they will respect the opinion. In summary of all the above regarding Dragons, there is much to be admired and commended. In our highest expression we are all Dragons of Wisdom anyway. What is this

year going to mean to us then, regarding all we have looked at thus far? To get to that point, we need the context of the past year as the springboard for what is coming. But as a teaser, this year looks to be much more promising than the one that is just past.

Summary of the Black Rabbit: From [last year's New Year letter](#), we had the following points extracted from "A look ahead":

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- The need for the war in Ukraine to end. The first half of the year devoted to finishing the conflict there. We can probably expect more regions (oblasts) to begin to question their allegiance to Kiev
- Firming of relations between the Chinese and Russian diplomatic initiatives relative to Africa and South America
- The expansion of BRICS
- If the elites in Europe and the US can pull it off, Europeans will be convinced of the need for more NATO
- The 2nd half of the year devoted to negotiations. The last Black Rabbit year resulted in détente.
- Temporarily, Europe will become more divided as the blowback from EU and US sanctions has become ineffective and cost prohibitive.
- The writing is on the wall for American influence in Syria, as in they will be gradually forced out.
- That brings us to Israel. With Bibi Netanyahu back in power Israel is primed for a showdown with the Palestinians and the Axis of Resistance. The situation in Israel looks to be very restive especially this year.
- We can expect more moves for reconciliation between the Saudis and Iran this year
- Washington will try hard to provoke a reaction from China
- South America will also be under extreme pressure and interference by the US

The Black Rabbit certainly gave us a memorable year, and not always in the happiest of veins. There were some remarkable events that serve to shape the geopolitical outlook going forward. The first was the rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia, brokered by the Chinese. This reflects the second half of the year being devoted to the negotiations, mentioned above. This will serve to greatly offset the troubles that precipitated on October 7, in that all sides now see the necessity for containing the conflict and not letting it erupt into a larger regional conflagration. Bibi Netanyahu definitely got his showdown with the Palestinians last year and is trying hard to provoke a wider conflagration with the axis of resistance. The BRICS block definitely expanded. It was originally supposed to be BRICS 11, but is now BRICS-10 due to the election of the neoliberal fanatic in Argentina, who is likely sent to destroy the what is left of the Argentine economy. This goes to the point above about South America coming under extreme pressure and interference by the US. The Argentine election obviously came under American influence.

There was more NATO expansion in Europe with the addition of Finland and Sweden into the NATO block, which they will probably come to regret later. European leaders are busy trying to scare their populations into more defense spending, largely a domestic political ploy to try to stay in power, seeing that their political fortunes are headed down the drain. Europe is becoming more and more restive, witness the large farmers protests in Germany France and Italy. Elections in Europe and the US this year are likely to be quite interesting. We'll see if the US even has an election this year.

As to American influence in Syria, the events of October 7 and the resulting genocide in Gaza have provoked a steadily increasing number and severity in attacks on American bases in Syria and Iraq. The Iraqis are now demanding that the Americans leave Iraq. American bombing of Iraqi resistance movements is not helping Washington's case either. As to Syria, the Saudis are now making approaches toward normalization with Damascus, which will further increase the pressure on the

Americans leave the bases they established in Syria. Syria will sooner or later become a key hub in the Belt and Road Initiative, as in an overland gateway to the Mediterranean and Europe.

Ukraine had become very unstable last year, and in the past days we see the reshuffling of the military establishment from Kiev. This will only hasten the demise of the regime in Kiev, reducing confidence in its leadership, and further reducing the morale of the troops. Ukrainian troops are not enamored of their new commander. In the forecast for last year mention was made that the war in Ukraine could very possibly end in 2023. Alas, that was not to be. The folks in Washington and the European elites are desperate to see this war continue, so they keep supplying money and weapons through a regime that is on its last legs, only prolonging the suffering of the Ukrainian people. There are growing reports of restiveness within Ukrainian society against the regime in Kiev. From other reports I have read, we are likely to see some dramatic developments in Ukraine – perhaps attempts at false flags, definitely more attacks on civilian targets in Russia from longer-range NATO weaponry, and internal unrest within Ukraine self. With this summary in mind, we move into the forecast for this year, starting with the commencement of a new period of 20 years. That cycle, as will be described, points to a brighter and more hopeful approach to extend over the next 20 years until 2044. P7

Feng Shui cycles: What follows is a peek into a large subject, of which we can only make mention of particulars in this short space. Of particular interest this year is a 20-year period (interval in a cycle) that started at the *lichun*. It is the ninth period of a particular school of Feng Shui, expressing the element of Fire. This is part of the larger 180-year cycle of this school of Feng Shui. The 180-year cycle is constituted of three rounds of the 60-year cycle of Chinese astrology, using the combinations of the Stems and Branches/Elements and Animals. This particular period which started this year is the last of the lower cycle of this 180-year cycle. The larger cycle is divided into three – a lower, middle and upper cycle of 60 years each. The 180-year cycle is concerned with the placement of houses and objects, which one normally associates with the practice of Feng Shui. But there are other cycles – many in fact. We touched on this larger cycle in [last year's Aquarius letter](#) (topic “Jupiter, Saturn and Feng Shui”).

The two main cycles in Feng Shui, those used in the Flying Star Feng Shui, are known as ‘the three cycles nine’, and ‘two cycles eight’ cycles. The current period that started this year is part of the ‘three cycles nine’ series of cycles. The latter, the ‘two cycles eight cycles’ started in 2017, also at the *lichun*. [There is a site that describes these cycles](#) in more detail. I will state at this point I am not a Feng Shui practitioner. My particular focus in Chinese astrology has been on the Four Pillars/BaZi system and a more intensive study of Chinese astronomy in relation to astrology, with the emphasis on looking at the interface between that and Western astrology.

The Planetary Terms: In that regard there are other cycles used in Feng Shui, but only with the most advanced, or perhaps esoteric, practitioners. If one looks at the Feng Shui divination plates throughout the ages, one might come across plates that contain some of these other cycles. Those cycles are called ‘Planetary Terms’, and they were outlined in Derek Walters’ main work on Chinese astrology⁹, as follows:

- The Wood Planet, Jupiter, governs birth and growth; being the element Wood, it is associated with the spring [hence the start at the *lichun*], and therefore new growth. Its lesser cycle is 12 years, its greater cycle 83 years. It governs everything that is precious and pleasurable.
- The Fire Planet, Mars, governs growth and development. Its lesser cycle is two years, its greater cycle is 79 years. It produces conflagration and brigandage.
- The Earth Planet, Saturn, governs the growth of virtue. Its lesser cycle is nine years, its greater cycle 29 years. It penetrates all the directions and is the creator of widows and orphans.

- The Metal Planet, Venus, governs the harvest. Its lesser cycle is one year, its greater cycle eight years.
- The Water Planet, Mercury, governs divination. Its lesser cycle is one year, its greater cycle is 65 years. It is extremely unlucky, turning fortune aspects into unfortunate ones.

As Walters describes, “Each planet has its own Term although as we have seen, only the Metal Planet Term appears regularly on the dial plates. Just as the astronomical planets have their periods of revolution and orbit, so the influences of the planetary Terms wax and wane in accordance with their cycles of activity. Each Term has two subcycles, one of which will be recognized by the astronomically-minded reader as the period of the planet’s orbit.” There is a bit more to this than what he states, though. P8

The greater cycles of these planets are determined by the relationship of the planets’ nodes with the ecliptic. In the case of Mercury and Venus, this is shown by the occultations of these planets on the face of the Sun, when the planetary node is most closely positioned at the center of the face of the Sun. I have done the calculations and these greater cycles of these planets bear out, with the exception of one – Saturn. For esoteric Western astrologers, therein lies a clue. That lesser cycle nine associated with Saturn ties in with the greater cycle of the third ray, which Saturn expresses, of 9,000 years. The cycles are divisible in orders of 10. I was told at the time by the mentor who suggested I study Chinese astrology, that the lesser cycle Saturn was indeed a valid cycle, even though I can find no relation between the node of Saturn with the ecliptic similar to the other planetary Terms. We won’t go further into that here. But the greater cycle of Venus is commonly known to Western astrologers and astronomers because that cycle is associated with the transits of Venus across the face of the Sun in certain periods. The greater cycle of Mercury is not so obvious, but if one cares to check the transits of Mercury across the face of the Sun, the cycle will be found to be borne out. We will leave these considerations now for a later posting.

The Fire Period: Returning to the Feng Shui period of Fire that just started, it has [the following interpretations](#):

“[The] Fire element is about passion, creativity, transformation, and inspiration. It also relates to fame, recognition, leadership, and spirituality. Period 9 will be a time of innovation, change, growth, and excitement. It will also be a time of opportunities, such as new technologies, social movements, and spiritual awakenings.”

We are coming out of period Eight, which started in 2004. This was just after the invasion of Iraq and the attempt to impose the PNAC project of the neocons in Washington. Period 8, from the site just linked had the following interpretation:

“Period 8 has been a time of building foundations, consolidating resources, and strengthening relationships. It has also been a time of challenges, such as environmental issues, economic crises, and health problems.”

It is of particular interest for us to look back over this last period as to what has been achieved. For Washington and the neocons it was an attempt at consolidating resources (controlling the oil of the Middle East) and strengthening relationships within NATO. We are seeing the results of that effort today. In short, it has been an abject failure for Washington. In the East, on the other hand, we saw the birth of the Belt and Road Initiative, the consolidation of the Greater Eurasian Union, the birth of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ASEAN – a general consolidation and spirit of cooperation between Asian nations and European Russia. Period 8 has indeed been a time of challenges, with climate change coming strongly into the public discourse, whether or not one actually believes the causes for it, definite economic crises particularly in 2008 and increasingly at present among the Western nations, and finally our all-time favorite, the pandemic and two wars. Given what took place over the past 20 years, we can perhaps look forward to a much brighter and

more exciting (in a good way) 20 years into the future. With these points being made, we leave our considerations for Feng Shui in this letter.

Finally, a look ahead: looking back on past Wood Dragon years, as in the past 300 years, we can perhaps get an idea of what to expect for this particular Wood Dragon year. One of those Wood Dragon years, the one in the late 18th century, coincided with the entry of Pluto into Aquarius, as we see this year. So, we're looking at revolutionary changes to be instituted this year and in the immediate years ahead. So, here goes with historical review of Wood Dragon years. P9

Past Wood Dragon Years

1964: Microwave background radiation is space is discovered as a measurable phenomenon, confirming the Big Bang as a plausible explanation for the beginning of the universe; [the Ranger program](#) sends back the **first close-up photos of the Moon's surface** (1,000 times clearer than those possible with Earth-based telescopes); the first computer programs are run in [BASIC](#); [the Higgs boson](#) and Higgs mechanism were predicted in three milestone papers in physics; the [charm quark](#) was predicted (Yes folks, even physics has charm); the [Epstein-Barr virus](#) (Epstein didn't kill himself) was first discovered (what [we used to call 'mono'](#), though I prefer stereo. BTW, remember quadrophonic? That went the way of 8-track tapes); [Moog first demonstrated his prototype synthesizers](#). [Oh, what a lucky man...](#)). In film, since Dragons love theatre: *Mary Poppins*, *My Fair Lady*, *Goldfinger*, *The Carpetbaggers*, *From Russia With Love*, *A Shot in the Dark*, *What a Way to Go!*, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *The Pink Panther*, *A Hard Day's Night*. Those were some big films, and some of the last of the American musicals. The Beatles appeared on Ed Sullivan, launching the British rock invasion of the US and Beatlemania in the US. The Stones appeared on Ed's show, too. He promised he would never have them back on. [Jackie Mason was banned from appearing on Ed's show](#) for allegedly giving Ed the finger. [Bewitched](#) aired for the first time, as did Gilligan's Island. We still get reruns here dubbed in Italian. It's a scream. Cassius Clay changed his name to Muhammad Ali. He was the greatest. Lyndon Johnson launched his [Great Society](#) initiative. On the dark side he also oversaw the [Gulf of Tonkin false flag](#), which took America to war in Vietnam. American protests and draft card burnings soon followed. [Johnson scared Americans into voting for him](#) that November. He ran on an anti-war platform. Some things don't seem to change. Dylan introduced the Beatles to Mary Jane. MLK Jr. was awarded the Nobel Prize.

1904: The US gained control of the Panama Canal; Rolls-Royce automobiles were born; Teddy Roosevelt was elected President; **the [interstellar medium](#) was discovered**; the vacuum tube (electronics) was invented, inaugurating the new field of electronics. Guitarists and audiophiles still swear by them. Geothermal power was first used to produce electricity (Forza Italia!). [The Heckelphone was introduced](#) (No, not telemarketers); The start of [Picasso's Rose Period](#); the start of the [Russo-Japanese War](#)

1844: This was also the start of the previous Period 9 in the 180-year Feng Shui cycle. The first recorded subcutaneous injections (Ireland); transcendental numbers were discovered; (It's π in the sky); [The Edict of toleration](#) was passed in the Ottoman Empire; The YMCA was born (later popularized by the Village People); vulcanized rubber was developed (no car tires without it. It was a Good Year); the [Treaty of Wanghia](#) was signed between the US and the Qing dynasty, establishing the unequal treaty relationship between the US and China; the British [Bank Charter Act](#) was enacted, checking the power of British banks; [a German astronomer figured out that the stars Sirius and Procyon must have unseen companions](#), leading to the eventual discovery of binary and trinary star systems

1784: The [Treaty of Paris came into effect](#), marking the official end of the American Revolutionary War. The United States was recognized in Europe as free, sovereign and independent. This caused a wave of revolution to sweep through European monarchies; the end of the 4th Anglo-Dutch War, marking the demise of the Dutch East India Company and the demise of Dutch power and influence; The [Affair of the Diamond Necklace in France](#) (for which Cagliostro was arrested – note

to Theosophists), which enflamed anti-monarchist sentiments in France, giving moral weight and popular support for the French Revolution; Russia established a colony in Kodiak, Alaska (maybe Texas this year); Immanuel Kant's essay "Answering the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" is published; **Charles Messier published his catalog of clusters and nebulas**. It is still in use and is a standard astronomical reference work.

1724: Catherine I (not to be confused with Catherine the Great) was named tsarina of Russia by Peter the Great, the 1st Russian empress; Giacomo F. Maraldi concludes, from his observations during an eclipse, that **the corona is part of the Sun**; Daniel Bernoulli expresses the numbers of the Fibonacci sequence in terms of the golden ratio; The Treaty of Constantinople is signed, partitioning Persia between the Ottoman Empire and Russia P10

Taking a deep Dragon's breath, then, we note the astronomical discoveries in past such years (bolded text, above). We can expect more this year. [There is quite a lot on tap for space this year](#), with the [Europa Clipper Mission](#), the Hera Mission, the ESCAPEDE spacecraft, the Venus Life Finder, six possible Moon missions, and that is just for starters. The James Webb Space Telescope continues to dazzle with stunning pictures from the final frontier. [The Parker Solar Probe](#) will fly extremely close to the solar surface to measure the Sun's corona. [The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter](#) will be searching for water on Mars.

A little closer to home, or at least on Earth, this year will be the one where we see the end of empire. Put simply, the world has had enough of empire and is moving on. Russia heads the BRICS group this year and it is expected that BRICS will begin to balloon outward in its membership. [Fifteen more countries](#) are expected to join the group this year in addition to the 10 current members. Seventeen more have expressed an interest in joining. The latter may join in the next few years. Once done that will spell the end of American dominance of the world's financial system, with firm alternatives to the USD dollar and a means to bypass the SWIFT system. There is still discussion of a common currency among members, but that looks to be farther out into the future.

Ukraine may be dismantled this year, or we may at least see the start of that. If the Western powers still stupidly insist on arming Ukraine with more lethal and longer range weapons the Russians will be forced to impose a DMZ or to move on Kiev and end the war decisively. The Americans in particular are insistent on seeing the war continue and they know the war is essentially lost. This is causing panic in Western European capitals because they are losing the narrative war and elections are coming, with right wing parties in several EU states poised to take power, notably in France and Germany, the two main powers remaining in the EU.

The Israelis and the Biden administration are boxed in with the war in the Levant. If they escalate they will likely suffer a large defeat or spark a regional war. The latter is still doubtful, as much as many commentators are calling for it. The key there is Iran, along with the Saudis, who are carefully managing their allied parties, because both nations have their huge energy infrastructure at risk in the event of a wider war. Expect the Americans to be pushed out of Syria this year, and Iraq as well. The key there is if the war in the Levant drags on, which would see escalations against America bases in the region. The next months there will be quite telling.

The Sahel in Africa is rapidly decolonizing, another region to watch this year. France is being pushed out, the Americans trying to take over, while the nations of the Sahel turn increasingly toward Russia for security. In Argentina the leader there is unlikely to go the distance and we can expect increasing unrest there as economic conditions continue to deteriorate.

As much as Washington would like to provoke China into moving on Taiwan the Chinese are too smart for that, and the Taiwanese don't really want to be invaded by China. It would destroy their economy. In terms of the Far East, the one to watch this year will be North Korea, who has made serious inroads with Russia as a result of the war in Ukraine and the machinations of Washington in

the South China Sea, in turn pushing the Japanese toward more of a role in the region militarily. Russia and the DPRK may soon have open borders in terms of trade, in consultation with China. Once the DPRK opens up, it will serve to alleviate the lot of its people over time. Trade and commercial interchange has a way of promoting that. That would be yet another blow to empire.

Mention was made in the discussion of the element wood about its connection with the electrical trades and electronics. In 2024 we can expect more advances in the field of quantum computing, which requires a special hardware architecture. That will enhance AI and computer modeling of vast systems. There will be a more concerted focus on AI this year, especially its dangers. It is become virtually impossible to recognize AI from the real thing in certain cases. This applies to sound technologies as well as video. As Elon Musk once said, when we summon AI we summon the demon. On the positive side, we've just about reached the limit of Moore's law and chip manufacturing. However, MIT is forecasting advances in 'chipelets' – very small chips that can be linked together to do everything a conventional chip does and even more. We are looking at ever-larger exascale computers – very large supercomputers that perform exaflops of data every second (that is one followed by 18 zeros). Basically, we are looking at breakthroughs in electronics, electricity generation (such as a greater emphasis on geothermal energy, for instance) and electrical transmission. Battery technology will be on the cards also. P11

And lastly there is the United States itself. Will there be civil war (Don't count on it. I will be doing a piece on that soon.) Will there be an election? Will Biden go the distance? Will Trump be elected for another term? Suffice it to say the US will be in turmoil this year, divided politically and socially. What that has often resulted in historically, especially with a shaky economy, is some event that will be an effort to take America to war. Again, I am not so sure, but there will be attempts at some sort of false flag or provocation along those lines. And Washington continues in its efforts to split Europe, focusing now on the three Baltic States and Poland to use as a cudgel against Russia. The folks in the Beltway never seem to learn. Tensions within the EU are only set to increase this year and we will probably begin to see some real schisms appearing in the Union. Washington is determined to eliminate Europe as an economic competitor (and so far has done a good job of it) while at the same time retaining it as a resource vassal.

In conclusion, we are Dragons, all. The Dragon carries a special wisdom, a type of wisdom we all carry and *are* in our higher Selves. In our personal lives we have simply lost sight of it. This year will call on that special wisdom. This year will call on us to be inventive, to stretch our imaginations, to think in the large instead of worrying about petty details, and most of all to *live* our wisdom. Great prosperity can come from an idea planted in rich soil and nurtured with the water of wisdom. "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves," a reminder from a quote above. In unity we will overcome the darkness of past years. Though people in power will try to keep us frightened and divided, we are rapidly awakening to a better way of doing things. There is no need for us to fear. We only need to act on our inner sense of what is right and true, while at the same time expanding our point of view. This year we have the pregnant possibility to throw off old modes of thought, to think in revolutionary terms, outside the box, as any good Dragon would do. Let your Dragon consciousness arise and soar!

Happy New Year!

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These letters are sent as a service. Feel free to pass them along, but do so without charge or alteration. If you wish to added to or deleted from the mailing list let me know.

¹ Walters, Derek, *The Secrets of Chinese Astrology* (2003) London, Hamlyn Pubs. p. 67

² Ibid, p. 73

³ Ong Hean-Tatt, *Chinese Animal Symbolisms* (1993) Malaysia, Pelanduk Pubs., p.72

⁴ Christie, Anthony, *Chinese Mythology* (1968) London, Hamlyn House publishing, p. 111

⁵ Ibid, p. 132, the legends of the flaming pearl (the Sun) and the Imperial Dragons which guarded the Imperial treasures under the water

⁶ *The Secret Doctrine II*, p. 365

⁷ Excerpted from Derek Walters' *The Chinese Astrology Bible* (2008) New York/London, Sterling Publications, pp. 46, 47

⁸ Ibid, p. 134

⁹ Walters, Derek, *The Complete Guide to Chinese Astrology* (1987) reprinted by Watkins Publishing, London, p. 265