

THE SIRIUS FESTIVAL 2021
THE FULL MOON OF LEO
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Greetings Everyone!

The old things have gone; everything is made new.¹ Where have we heard that before? Oh yeah, the old Peter Allen tune!² Well, maybe not quite, but the meaning will have a bearing on what we will examine as we go along. Here in Rovereto we have had our first touch of autumn weather. One can sense it in the air. Overall it has been a fairly hot summer, for Rovereto, but the last few days a cool rain has come and we have been saved from watering the garden. There are other changes taking place here, too. We lost about a third of our small shops in town due to the lockdowns. There is one street in particular where it was particularly noticeable. But now, walking through, new shops are opening. Almost all the shop spaces on that street are now open again with new shops. Life seems to be returning, even with the new variant beginning to take hold here in Europe. The UEFA championships have really helped the new variant take hold and the next few weeks will be telling as to how it all goes. But in terms of the *calcio* (soccer/football), Forza Azzuri! Italy finally won the European championship after a 52-year drought, and against the UK. There were celebrations into the night in many cities across Italy, and some long faces the next day in the UK, along with [racist comments about the their black players](#) on the one hand, but then [accolades to them](#) on the other hand. There is a strong Leo emphasis in both nations. Personally, I'm not a sports fan and didn't watch the match, but we were happy to see Italy finally win one.

Back to life in Rovereto, we have also started to have some of our regular summer festivals again. This past week was [the Vintage Festival](#) (machine translate). It's a blast from the past, complete with vintage cars, vintage clothes, music from the '50s and '60s, and street food from the era, too. And Italians do love American vintage, especially hamburgers and rock-'n-roll from the era – all

with an Italian touch, of course, given Italy's Leo emphasis. It is fun to relive the past a bit. I won't tell you how much I remember from that era, but it would be enough to label me as a 'person of a certain age'. We'll leave it at that. When it comes to vintage, it refers to something that never really goes out of style, something that lasts over time and even sometimes improves, like cars and vinyl LPs, for instance. Maybe younger readers won't know what LP means, but us vintage types can fill them in. That said, I'm not really into vintage that much, either, having Uranus prominent in my chart, but I do have appreciation for the art and craft that went into such items. In my working life with machinery maintenance I was constantly making the old machines like new again. And I will take a tube Hi Fi or guitar amp over solid state one any day. Tubes just sound better than transistors. Sometimes old tech is a better way to go. And no, I see no need to debate the point. But this brings us to another point, which is Leo, this being the Leo letter. And in a way, though seldom discussed, Leo is all about making the old things and capacities fit for new purposes, and with that extra bit of the famous Leo ego (we like to call it 'personality') thrown in for good measure.

Leo is ruled in all three of its rulerships – orthodox, esoteric and hierarchical – by the Sun.³ It is the only sign that has all three levels of rulership by the same planet. But the Sun in this context is not classed as a planet in esoteric astrology. It is said to 'veil', or represent other planets. In the case of Leo the Sun veils Uranus and Neptune, described as follows:

“...the Sun veils certain hidden planets, and in the case of Leo, the two planets through which the Sun focusses its energy or influences (like a lens) are Neptune and Uranus. The "heart of the Sun" employs Neptune as its agent, whilst the central, spiritual Sun pours its influences through Uranus...”⁴

The Uranian rulership of Leo only comes in at the stage when a person can consciously arouse the latent fire of matter at the base of the spine, a.k.a. kundalini, or *tummo* in Buddhism. This is thus a very advanced stage in a person's spiritual evolution. We are not concerned with that aspect of it here. So, for most Leo types on the path, Neptune holds a dominant tone in their development and life path. But that holds a greater significance than might appear on the surface. For most Leo types, though, hearing that Neptune holds a big sway in their life path may come as a disappointment or even shock. Neptune is not a planet associated with willpower, for which Leo is known, and is generally seen as a soft and even mystical or even nefarious influence. Moist Leo types in esoteric circles I have seen do not see themselves as being mystical. They would much rather be seen as occultists, leaders in thought and action. Such is personality on the path.

The Sun rules Leo as we know it in standard, or orthodox astrology. The Sun is life, vitality, light, representing the soul, which brings us to life. The sun is the center of our solar system, around which all planets in our solar system revolve. In like fashion, Leo types will always be found in the center of every circle, either through magnetism (which is the better way) or through self-assertion. The developed Leo type will radiate somewhat like a sun, attracting attention rather than forcing it, through the force of their character and example, rather than putting on airs. Leo types can act in both fashions. But how to attain that magnetism, which in reality is an aspect of the soul? Here we get to the real purpose of Neptune with respect to Leo. When it comes to personal magnetism, the Leo type – either the Sun or the Ascendant – must be made anew. They must be reborn, and to do that requires self-examination, trial and error, research, study and most of all, practice. The latter brings in the will, for which Leos are known. Performance artists know all about practice. Practice makes better. Practice builds in capacity and confidence. Confidence – now there is a word for which all Leos are known. It can be a quiet kind of understated knowing and ability, or in extreme cases it can amount to hubris. Pride is the downfall of every Leo type. But there is yet another aspect of remaking oneself here, and it relies on two words: essentials and heart.

Leo transmits two rays⁵ (qualities), which are those of will or power (1st ray), and science and concrete knowledge (5th ray). In a sense, the 5th ray leads to the 1st ray. In the earlier stages of Leo experience it is the scientific method that holds sway, the 'science of the soul'. This is the

investigative method of the Leo type and it occupies a great part of a Leo's experience. But study will finally reach a conclusion, or dead end, where no amount of further study is of use. Then, experience must be the guide. There is a particular description of the process that takes place in this 5th ray interval in the Leo experience, called the 'law of repulse' for the 5th ray.⁶ To cut the process to essentials, the person at this phase must destroy all that has been non-essential in one's experience and save those few things which are deemed to be the most precious or essential. In this case 'destroy' does not really mean destruction of property or things, though it can. It is really a process of losing attachment to all the things in one's course of investigations that may have helped in the process, but which are no longer suitable. Then, a most interesting process takes place, speaking figuratively: The Leo must imbue these essentials with 'heart'. The destruction mentioned, in the case of Leo, means abandoning old sentiments and emotional responses and 'raising them into the heart'. In the Cancer letter we looked at this proves of 'raising the energies of the solar plexus into the heart, and Leo, via Neptune, is directly involved in completing this process.'⁷ In terms of occult practice, this entails actually going into one's heart center/chakra in practice and engaging the 'pure reason' of buddhi, which Neptune represents.⁸ Buddhi resides in the heart center. Leo rules the heart and the spine in astrology. The correspondences will be apparent to anyone who has engaged in advanced meditative practices.

Follow your bliss, pal: What happens when buddhi is really engaged? Any sense of separateness from others disappears. One is in a state of bliss. This is not the sense of bliss one might sense in sexual union, though it can be. It is a *feeling* as well as a knowing, a mystical experience. It is the field wherein intuition takes place. Occultly, this is a 'middle place', prior to greater attainments. It dissolves the ego, yet one retains one's individuality, if you get the distinction. This, then, is the 'jumping off point', if you will, to the pointed application of willpower in one's practice. This latter point is Leo transmitting Uranus, which marks a complete reorganization of one's orientation. One is thereby 'made new again'. In Buddhism, generating true bliss is essential for any advanced practice. What does this feel like, then? How do we know if we have attained it? Well, most of us know joy, like when we get our 'heart's desire' (that is another key, dwelling on the phrase). The bliss of buddhi is like joy magnified by magnitudes. And it does indeed generate intense magnetism. This is the ultimate goal of the Leo experience – to lose one's ego and yet retain one's individuality in an endless sea of bliss. This describes the Leo motto on the path: "I am that and that I am". In that experience, then, we are truly in the world but not of it. We are partly 'other worldly'. We have the old form, but it is transformed. The form is 'made anew'. Our world view is made anew. We are 'born again' in such a state. And that is only for starters. Our journey as individuals only increases by leaps and bounds from there. What else can we say about the experience, except to say, "[Follow your bliss, pal!](#)" (video) Oh, but then there is the full moon and those worldly matters to tend to, after all.

The full moon takes place on 24 July 2021 at 02:37 UT (12:37 pm AEST). [According to the Old Farmer's Almanac](#), this one is called the 'buck moon', because a buck deer's antlers are in full growth mode this time of year in the northern hemisphere. The Sabian symbols for the lunar axis are of interest:

- "An epidemic of mumps" (2nd degree Leo, Sun) Delta variant, anyone?
- "An unexpected thunderstorm" (2nd degree of Aquarius, Moon) That may apply to world affairs, as we will see.

Otherwise, the figure for the full moon features a septile kite, with Mars at the tail and Neptune at the head, the Moon and Uranus forming the wings. It is a noteworthy integrated aspect set, because it points to circumstances arising that can bring valuable insights, through a combination of hasty actions and muddled thinking. If that sounds contradictory, the insights come after one sits down and reappraises one's actions. The United States is about to do that with regard to Afghanistan and Iraq, for instance. We will get to that in a bit. It defines a situation where there may well be some

original thought behind projects, but at the same time they are not well executed or acted upon too soon, causing valuable reassessments. But as to the Sun and Moon, being the most important features in the chart, the Moon is conjunct Pluto, signaling an end to old situations or ways of doing things. It is also an aspect, coupled with the Sun, that speaks quite a lot of power politics, this being a mundane figure. And there is copious activity going on in that realm at the moment, as well as some very much needed changes in some political arenas.

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What's your favorite color?: For example, referring to needed changes, the United States is currently seeking to prosecute several color revolutions, [aided by the British government](#). The changes needed refer to the respective approaches of the British and American foreign and intelligence services to the target nations. These revolutions divide a nation and also divide it from its neighbors, which are the intent of the revolution, thereafter installing regimes sympathetic to the West if successful. Currently we have those, to name the most visible ones, being prosecuted in [Belarus](#), Venezuela ([Juan Guaidò is still held up as the 'legitimate' leader by the West](#)), [Cuba](#), [Myanmar](#), Ukraine (yes, that is still ongoing, as it is [still resisted in parts of the country](#)), Lebanon, Syria (the US is still trying to bring down Assad, but then, maybe not), and now Turkey (Watch for it. It's starting). These so-called revolutions are also known alternatively as hybrid warfare and regime change operations. They typically start as peaceful protests, are lauded in the Western press, then turn violent when the peaceful protests don't succeed, thereafter having the leaders of the target nations branded as oppressive, dictatorships, 'regimes' and similar pejorative terms in the Western press. The suppression of the revolts are covered widely in the media, while the violence against the governments is ignored. Along with this, the leaders of the 'free world' start sending tweets and posts in social media saying, "We stand with the people of....." (Insert nation). We just saw this [in Hong Kong, for instance](#), which was a failed attempt at a color revolution, fomented by the US and UK. There have been and still are repeated attempts also in Iran and Russia ([Navalny was the latest such incident](#).)

Our liberal dose of propaganda: Most readers of these letters live in the liberal world order, at the moment largely headed by Washington and the EU. Some of the ideas and observations in these letters may sound odd, out of place or at odds with what we have come to believe. But the international order is changing rapidly, and it is changing in favor of what our press and leaders routinely call 'authoritarian' or 'populist/nationalist' states. The people of said nations do not tend to see their own nations in that light. Instead, an increasing number of the people look upon the liberal order askance. Many of the younger people in those nations, however, believing our propaganda, say they want to migrate to the West, thinking greater opportunities are there, or they believe the Hollywood version of Western life. Our media has been very effective in projecting such ideas. In turn, we are led to believe that people of said nations long to be free of their 'oppressive governments', that they would throng to our shores if we allowed them to. The truth is, what those people mostly want is to be free of crushing economic woes, like we see with the immigrants on the Mexican border or Lampedusa, Greece and Spain in the EU. And the West has had a direct hand in those crushing economic woes, like we see in Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, Lebanon and a long list of nations who do not agree with our views. Like it or not, we in the West bear a direct responsibility for the migrant crises we are now experiencing because of the sanctions we place on those nations and the destabilization we foment there. And then we are led to believe it is because of communist or socialist policies. We are too comfortable in our ignorance of those facts.

Surprise!: In an important development, there are strong hints, not reported in US news but elsewhere, that the US will soon be leaving Iraq and Syria. The Russian Special Presidential Envoy to Syria, Alexander Lavrentyev, has stated such in several recent interviews. The [Kurds in northeastern Syria have taken note](#). The Russian envoy stated that could happen at any time, and soon. It is worth noting the armed forces of Russia and the US are in regular contact in Syria to avoid mishaps, having a version of a hotline between them, even if the leaders of the two nations

refuse to talk. Such a withdrawal of US troops could facilitate dialog between the SDF and the Damascus, the point being that when the US leaves, the Kurds will be left at the mercy of the Turks, who see the Kurds as a domestic threat. If there is rapprochement and a deal made between the Kurds and Damascus, the Turks would have no reason to stay in northeastern Syria. And the reason the Americans will leave Syria is because they are leaving Iraq. With no or very few troops in Iraq, re-supply to their troops in Syria becomes untenable. That would mean also the closing of the large base at al-Tanf.

There are several reasons for the US to leave the region. Firstly, the strategy of trying to starve out the Syrians, Lebanese, Iranians, *et al*, in an effort to produce regime change is not working. Secondly, it is quite costly to keep troops in the region, not to mention all the contractors who support those troops. One might think it cynical, but it is simply not cost-effective to keep those troops in the region for whatever gains are made. That money is more needed at home, or to focus on China, depending on what one sees as more important. Thirdly, the pandemic has not curtailed China's economy or rise in the least. That along with their growing alliance with Russia and their growing influence across Asia has the hawks in Washington quite concerned. There is a real sense of urgency now in Washington about China, in the sense that something has to be done and quickly to curtail the growth of the BRI and Chinese influence. US forces will likely be transferred to bases encircling China and Russia. They won't be coming home, though it will be cast that way in the media. Those troops are under contract and must serve out their time in the military somewhere. Washington wants to be able to concentrate solely on China. Then there are also issues with troop readiness, recruitment, troop fatigue, failing military equipment (like the F35) and so on. And lastly, domestic politics play a role.

The Democrats need a big win in order to go into the midterms next year with any confidence. 'Bringing the troops home' will do that, though many Republicans will be rankled at the thought that Trump was not allowed to do so. Domestic politics was also the biggest reason Trump wanted the troops out, looking at the timeline of his policy, because the 2020 election was around the corner and he wanted a win for his voter base. Domestic politics plays a much bigger role in US foreign policy than people might realize. The situation in Iraq and Syria had become static, too, and the defense contractors were not making much money off a stalemate. That may sound cynical, too, but defense jobs also play a key role in domestic politics, and [a significant part of America's economy is geared toward war](#), though it is called 'defense'. There is just possibly one more reason we could be leaving Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan: perhaps it has finally dawned on enough people in Washington that our unipolar moment is over and we need to be more sensible. We cannot attack Russia or China and win. The cost would just be too high. What we will see instead is an uptick in hybrid war.

[Russia is playing a hand in these evolving events](#). China is, too, behind the scenes. Couple the coming events in Iraq with the troop pullout in Afghanistan, and we see that there are indeed very significant changes taking place in the world chessboard. Asia is quickly becoming fully consolidated as a trading bloc, with military security. With the troops gone from Iraq, the Iraqi Leo rising in its national chart will kick in, no doubt, and they will quickly begin to remake themselves. China had made inroads there previously. Iran has been a big help to them, also with Leo rising. Iraq wants to form a strategic partnership with China and join China's BRI. China would bring valuable infrastructure development to Iraq. It already has a large [strategic partnership with Iran](#). These things will take time, but the clock is ticking to 2025 – there's that date again – and we see shifts in the world power base accelerating at a very quick pace. That brings us to the US-China tensions and what might eventuate in the next couple of years. In the meantime, keep an eye out on Iraq and Syria.

Energy follows thought: We all know that old occult axiom by now. We also know another colloquial saying: Be careful what you wish for – you might get it! Wishes carry thoughts, too. In light of recent rhetoric and ‘news’, we could all stand to spare a few thoughts and examine our wishes. Next year marks a sobering, if not thought-provoking anniversary – the 60th anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis – you know, the one that almost saw nuclear Armageddon come upon us, just prior to peace love and rock-and-roll breaking out across the West, as well as the escalation in Vietnam. For readers familiar with my Chinese New Year letters, the 60-year cycle carries weight when it comes to international relations. In 1962 the Cold War was running hot, the rhetoric was over the top on both sides, with Khrushchev saying the Soviets were churning out missiles “[like sausages](#)”, for instance (which was an exaggeration). The American response to the Soviet missiles in Cuba was to place a naval blockade around Cuba. Just as a side note, the [info on the Russian missile capabilities and types in the Wikipedia article is untrue](#). Russian capabilities, numbers and types of missiles were far more advanced than American sources like to admit. The entire linked article and many of the comments are worth taking the time to read and consider, given current circumstances. And in the last few years we have heard talk – and thankfully just talk – of possible naval blockades around China and in the Malacca Strait.

This preview brings us to the main point: Be very careful about what we want to believe regarding what we are told about China, especially regarding the coronavirus and alleged human rights abuses. It is ‘narrative steering’ on the part of Western intelligence agencies and mainstream media, and to malign purposes. There are factions within Washington and the UK who actually think a war with China is a good idea. And to that effect, there has been a recent turnaround in the narrative about the virus having been leaked from the lab in Wuhan. We touched in this in the last letter, but the story in the media and on social media is becoming particularly dangerous now. It would pay for us to remember the history around such stories, where the leaders of nations who do not follow Washington’s desires are painted as dictators, where human rights abuses are alleged and most often with what are unbelievable numbers, ‘testimony’ from unnamed sources or from disgruntled expats, and so forth. We could look at a long list of such stories, but we won’t here. Just remember the stories that steered us into unwanted wars – babies being thrown from incubators (1st Gulf War), the fabled weapons of mass destruction in Iraq (Iraq War, with ‘fabled’ being the operative word), 9/11 as the pretext for a mass invasion and occupation of Afghanistan (when it could have been a simple special op to take out Bin Laden and subsequent withdrawal), and so forth. Emotions across the West, but especially in the US, are being whipped into hatred over this virus – with very shaky or no evidence to support the narrative this came from a Chinese lab. A little self-examination is in order, [starting with the following, for instance](#):

“...embedded in much of the discussion about the lab leak is a distrust of China and Chinese people...There is a largely unchallenged Orientalism or Sinophobia among Western progressives [and conservatives] that makes them predisposed to think the Chinese government or Chinese scientists could or would hide evidence for a laboratory origin due to an innate and exceptional penchant for ‘authoritarianism,’ ‘secrecy’ or ‘dishonesty.’ This leads to a presumption of guilt, and an interpretation of every action of the Chinese government as suspicious, when it is most likely what any other government would do in China’s situation.”

Honesty with oneself can be difficult sometimes, especially when it contradicts what would seem to be a foregone conclusion or strongly held belief. And I must admit, I used to think along those lines when I was younger and still living in the US. Travel, experience and educating oneself with a genuine curiosity about other cultures tends to show the commonality of people across nations. There is this also, given everything we have heard over the past 18 months:

“...a great deal of the agitated commentary on this subject [COVID and the pandemic in general] seems outlandish and implausible. Many activists seem to assume a unified worldwide conspiracy involving China, America, Russia, Israel, Iran, and virtually every other nation, all secretly working together to pretend that Covid is dangerous and

that the vaccines against it are not...But the notion of all these mutually-hostile countries collaborating in such a bizarre scheme seems extremely unlikely, a[s] Russian President Vladimir Putin recently made exactly this important point in his long annual presentation to his concerned citizens [he called the idea, “absolute rubbish”]...

Particularly absurd has been the cast of primary villains among many of these agitated activists, who often focus upon Klaus Schwab of the World Economic Forum and Microsoft founder Bill Gates as the diabolical masterminds of our global calamity, with their plot identified as “the Great Reset...”

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And on and on. We can add population reduction into the mix, too. I don't necessarily agree with all the points made in these articles, but on the whole and as their main point, they call out the narrative steering by the mainstream and point out the main reasons for it: American domestic politics (there are the midterms next year in the US and the ‘China virus’ meme appeals to conservative voters, which Democrats will need to stay in office) and the primary US foreign policy, which is to disrupt China's rise as a peer competitor. A subtext to the latter policy is to somehow disconnect from China, to the extent of going to war with China, ‘if need be’. These last points need to be further emphasized, because from the first decade of this century there has been a growing consensus of the policy hawks in Washington that China's rise must be checked. This has especially been the case since Xi Jinping rose to the leadership of the CCP, who just celebrated their centenary. After a century in existence, there are still voices across the West who wistfully wish for and state that the CCP is in its immanent stage of collapse and its final days. Their dream will not be fulfilled any time soon the way things are going, as much as they wish for it.

Our defining struggle?: What all the preceding boils down to is a statement made by Biden in an address to Congress, where he stated that the defining struggle of the 21st century will be that of the US against China. Really? Perhaps the man can see into the future, but such a statement is made from only a very America-centric and narrow point of view. The remarks may have been intended for a domestic audience, because [there are signs US-China relations may be shifting slightly in favor of dialog over confrontation](#). The same is true of Europe. Germany wants cooperation with China regarding chips, for instance, and other high tech items. But as for struggles, there are a few other struggles going on, in case no one has noticed, like rising extremes in weather (like we just saw in Germany), clean water and food shortages, polluted oceans, mass species extinctions, widening wealth gaps and so on. But those other issues are on the back plate for some factions in Washington. And what about the rest of the world, you know, outside the US? What are the defining struggles of other nations? Well, it turns out other nations could frankly care less about Washington's concerns about China. We'll have more on the latter point in a bit.

The real struggle: I would say this about the immediate struggle before us at this moment, in terms of international relations: The primary struggle is not about one nation against another, but is instead within Washington, London and Brussels as they seek to keep the present economic system intact. The rest of the world is moving on. There is actually less and less support for a conflict with China across nations among the people of those nations. And in our supposed democracies, it is public opinion that will decide the outcome of the growing crisis in Washington's eyes. But even at that, we see that whoever leads the country, it makes no difference as to policy. Stand back and look – there is a clear line of policy across US and UK administrations, in that the major threats to their security are always the same, as is the rhetoric and the spending that goes along with it, no matter if ‘W’, Obama, Trump or Biden, at least in the US, or Blair, Brown, Cameron, May or Johnson in the UK. Neoliberals and neocons are the drivers of Washington's policies, and behind them are the nation's oligarchs. And in the UK, it is the City of London and their oligarchs that decide the fate of the nation, at least at the moment. It's the old struggle between capital and labor, and we have reached a deciding moment (as in these present years) in that struggle. The decisive nature of that struggle was shown to us in the 9 Jan 2020 eclipse, with the Saturn and Pluto conjunction in

Capricorn at the eclipse axis and the very striking differences in response to the pandemic between nations, declared very close to that date, and where that has led us at present.

Before we move on to other topics, the Cuban missile crisis was mentioned. In relation to the 60 year cycle, that would mark another crisis next year, possibly. With the current trajectory of Washington and the UK, with attempts to form blocs of alliances against 'autocratic states', we may possibly see another crisis like we saw in 1962. That said, we note that the Cuban missile crisis led to détente instead of military action, and the world was spared what could have been a nuclear conflict. The Russians and the Americans had to actually sit down and talk instead of bellowing nationalistic rhetoric at each other. I expect we will see much the same this time, because there actually are some sensible people in the world's capitals, who have weighed all the options and who rightly fear another large war. In the meantime, though, it pays for us to be aware of how the powers that be are attempting to shape our opinions and to agitate us to an emotional state wherein we may feel a desire for vengeance and action based on flimsy, if any evidence. It is not true that a lack of evidence when it comes to this virus and its origins means evidence of obfuscation. With these points in mind, we move on the matters Leo across the world.

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The fracturing in the EU: Shhh...Don't tell anyone, but the EU is facing growing internal divisions and fracturing in the near future. Actually, people need to know this, to pay attention to it and to look at why, because what is happening in the EU now will have serious repercussions for the bloc in the near future. We do not hear about these things in the mainstream press very much at all. And with Biden's pronouncement that "America is back!", the divisions within the EU are only set to accelerate. Leo has strong influence throughout the European bloc. It is one of the factors that has led to many terrible wars on that continent. But that same Leo emphasis may also serve to cause significant breaks with Washington's influence there, which is already starting.

There is a growing antagonism and possible split between Eastern European nations in the EU bloc, especially in the Visegrad nations, and the remainder of the bloc in Western Europe. [The Visegrad states are revolting against liberalism](#). With the recent [cave-in by Washington, lifting antagonism on the Russians and the Germans](#) who have now completed Nord Stream II, the Poles and the Baltic States are beginning to see Washington and the EU will not really back their core interests. The completion of that pipeline is also symbolic and subconsciously, or maybe consciously it is reminiscent of the [Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact](#), which saw Poland divided between Germany and Russia in WWII after Germany invaded Poland. That in turn led to Operation Barbarossa, when Germany invaded Russia and overran the greater part of Europe. This is mentioned because of old cultural memories and the fear German-Russian cooperation evokes from some nations in Europe. The Poles still harbor hatred toward Russia and are one of the main parties pushing that hatred inside Ukraine, plus the fact that post-WWII part of old Poland was ceded to Ukraine. We see esoterically that Poland and Romania are to have a hand in Europe's evolution into the future, and that the states of Eastern Europe may at some point form an economic bloc with Russia and China.⁹ Poland still has old antagonisms and fascism to work out.¹⁰ Russia and Poland have had very mixed relations with Russia in the past, with Poland being the more antagonistic, along with Lithuania. At the moment both nations are more hostile to Russia. However, all the Eastern European nations have signed [memoranda of understanding on China's Belt and Road Initiative](#).

Ukraine and the Russia: The 2014 coup in Ukraine has been used as a wedge against certain EU states who would want to do business with Russia. However, Ukraine has been talking seriously with China about investment, and in a surprise move has signed deals for investment. This will be interesting to watch. [Western news services have already sounded a sour note](#), stating Ukraine was 'pressured' by China into dropping its name from a list of 40 countries condemning alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang before China would ship its coronavirus vaccines to Ukraine. So, given Western alleged support for Ukraine, why is Ukraine asking for Chinese vaccines to start? Why not

just give Ukraine the Western-made vaccines. Problem solved. The recent [HMS Defender incident](#) off Crimea and the Donbass standoff with Russia a few months ago have shown the folks in Kiev perhaps they might find better friends elsewhere, as in looking to the east for support. Perhaps some lights are beginning to come on in Kiev. Lo and behold, on July 4th, after Ukraine withdrew its name from the Xinjiang list, [the two nations confirmed the deal for Chinese investment](#), "...encouraging companies and financial institutions from both countries to 'actively cooperate' on roads, bridges and railways projects. The agreement, which was signed on June 30, was the latest rapprochement between Beijing and Kyiv, whose foreign policy was considered pro-Western since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014." The July 4th date is interesting, given American sentiments. Then again perhaps there is nothing to it. But the catch words in the news services are all there – 'pressured by China', 'annexed by Russia' and so forth.

Who is really pressuring whom when it comes to Ukraine? The EU and US have vested interests in keeping [Ukraine weak and fractured](#), as well as keeping anti-Russian sentiments running high in Kiev. They also want Ukraine's industries and infrastructure in Western hands. Ukraine has lost its best and brightest to the EU and Russia since the coup. We have personal family experience with Ukraine and we hear all the stories, as well as the conditioning. The former live-in caregiver for my father-in-law is from western Ukraine and she comes to stay with us between jobs. *Badante* (caregivers) from outside Italy are not treated very well in general and make low wages, yet they send money back to Ukraine. This particular badante became a good friend of the family and there is great mutual respect between us all. Yet, to hear her stories from home, the situation there is dire. We have no reason to doubt her. There are many Ukrainians working here and their stories are all very similar. Ukraine today is like [Russia was in the '90s under neoliberalism – poor, lawless, very wide wealth gaps, lower life expectancy and so forth](#). As if on cue with the timing of the Chinese deal with Ukraine, Putin published an article on the official presidential site of the Russian Federation, speaking, "[On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians](#)." It is in English. He went on [to clarify certain points and answer questions](#) (also in English). I recommend reading it, especially if you want to know the history of Russia-Ukraine relations and how we got to the present sorry state of affairs there. You will also hear a Vladimir Putin very different to what we hear about in Western media:

"I am confident that true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia. Our spiritual, human and civilizational ties formed for centuries and have their origins in the same sources, they have been hardened by common trials, achievements and victories. Our kinship has been transmitted from generation to generation. It is in the hearts and the memory of people living in modern Russia and Ukraine, in the blood ties that unite millions of our families. Together we have always been and will be many times stronger and more successful. For we are one people. Today, these words may be perceived by some people with hostility. They can be interpreted in many possible ways. Yet, many people will hear me. And I will say one thing – Russia has never been and will never be "anti-Ukraine". And what Ukraine will be – it is up to its citizens to decide."

I have a sense about these events in relation to Ukraine and the region. It will take time, maybe beyond my lifetime, but the seeds are being sown. I won't say more, but people will only put up with so much suffering. Ukraine and Russia both endured the same world wars and atrocities. Ukrainians working in Russia now see what is taking place there with Russia's rise and they also see the decline and decay in Ukraine. It is mostly the western part of Ukraine that has the strong anti-Russian sentiment, fomented largely by the Poles and Baltic States, old antagonisms, if you read Putin's article. Of course, the elites in the EU and the folks in Washington play on those old animosities. But for Ukraine to turn to China instead of the EU or Washington shows a change in attitudes in Kiev. Ukraine is interested in the BRI. And why not? The EU is certainly no help. Washington is happy to sell weapons the neo-Nazis in Ukraine, but withholds vaccines. The recent standoff held the possibility of the destruction of the current Ukrainian state.

EU wokeness: Leaving Ukraine and moving on to the EU, full of Leo emphases, [there was a recent event, a very heated debate](#) within the hallowed chambers of the European Council:

“At the end of last month, the EU collapsed into emotional melt-down. It occurred when Charles Michel, Council President, decided to move up a summit debate on LGBTQI and EU values — in a reaction to a letter of concern drafted by 17 Council members. Dutch PM, Rutte, used the moment ‘to go nuclear’ (as he had earlier promised), saying in advance of the summit that: **“My goal is to bring Hungary to its knees on this issue.”** And, at the summit itself, Rutte threatened that Hungary “must repeal” its (allegedly) “anti-gay law”, and respect fundamental human rights, “which are not negotiable — or they must leave [the Union]”.

Rutte acknowledged that “I can’t push them out”. He argued however, that Orbán’s (alleged) ‘anti-gay’ law **“seriously contradicts the values that Europe stands for”, and insisted that they were not up for debate. Should the EU not act now, it would stop being a union of values and would become a mere trade bloc,** Rutte insisted...”

Emphases added. We will not be addressing gender politics or ideology here, but [the Visegrad nations have nailed their complaints to the doors of the EU](#). What is more important to our considerations is the divisiveness of the issue, along with many others, and the way it was put to the other member states by the EU Council. Rutte’s quip about, “a mere trade bloc” is of particular interest to us regarding the EU. Was an economic union not one of the original intents behind the EU? These sorts of arguments are very similar to what we see happening within the United States and the UK, in fact, across the Western world. ‘Wokeness’ is alive and well in the EU, for instance, at least among its elites. But to finish with the quote, there are very serious doubts that ‘Hungary will be brought to its knees’ on the issue. The national [chart of the current Hungarian state](#) shows Scorpio Sun, Leo Moon and Capricorn rising. Also, the Sun is sextile to Uranus. The Hungarians are always going to think outside the box and reject any outside proclamations about how they should behave as a nation. Another interesting side to the Sun/Uranus aspect is it is one of the indicators of long life. The main reason for Hungary’s law is to try to boost domestic birth rates, which means natural families, and to preserve their culture against the waves of immigrants that have passed through the EU bloc in recent years.

Yet, the pronouncements by the leaders cited in the preceding quote state pretty specifically and pointedly that no EU state is to have any sovereignty when it comes to family values and gender politics, at least. That sovereignty applies basically across the board on any issue and this is the real heart of the matter that will cause splits in the EU. And ‘gender *politics*’ is exactly what the term describes. It is used partly as a wedge issue across the West to keep liberal politicians in power. If we really wanted to be truthful about gender politics, it is not wholly about inclusiveness. It also divides a populace and causes a backlash from more conservative members of society. Orbán’s approach, falling outside of EU ‘norms’, is thereby branded as ‘populist’, as if it was a pejorative term. In the true sense of ‘populist’ – the government representing the will of the populace – [Viktor Orbán’s party won the last election in a landslide](#). So, we might really question what the real norms of the people of the various EU states actually are. Hungary on the whole has a deeply conservative voting public, judging by election results. That does not appear to be changing any time soon. And I can tell you, from living in Italy, that LGBTQI policy is not high on the list of the average Italian’s concerns. [Matteo Salvini’s Lega Nord Party still leads](#) by a small margin in polling, followed closely by Giorgia Meloni’s Fratelli d’Italia Party, both parties being deeply conservative. Both of those parties have strong nationalist, Euro-sceptic elements.

The EU and Leo: The preceding examples bring us to the larger issues facing the EU – economic, demographic, political, cultural and so forth. So, before we proceed further, where are the many Leo influences in the EU and Europe in general, and by extension the world? We have covered this to a degree in past Leo letters, but to give the rulerships again, we have Leo as the soul expression worldwide in Italy, Romania, Brazil and London. Leo rules the personality in France, Russia, Rome

and Berlin. Geneva has Leo as a generic ruler. In national charts (the ones I have examined), we have India and Pakistan, Bolivia, Gaza and South Korea as the Sun sign. With Leo rising we have the EU itself, Iraq, Iran, Austria, the Russian Federation and the EU Parliament. In Europe, then, there is quite a lot of roaring between the various lions and the hubris that can often go along with that. We might also say there is quite a lot of hot air and posturing coming out of Europe, including the UK and Russia, as well as many positive Leo qualities in terms of leadership. In short, we have the entire range of Leo expressions across Europe. But these same Leo characteristics in the past have led to some of the most brutal rivalries on the continent, as in between France and London, or France, London and Russia, or Berlin against France, London and Russia, to point to a few.

Rome once ruled over most of Europe, either via the Roman Empire or via the Catholic Church. As an aside, the Catholic Church has a 1st ray soul and a 3rd ray personality, along with a 6th ray mind, a 6th ray astral body and a 7th ray physical nature,¹¹ the latter giving the strong emphasis on ritual. The 6th ray emphases connect with Italy's 6th ray soul and Rome's 6th ray personality, hence the seat of the Church being in the Vatican City, just outside of Rome, but in the metro area. In the Latin world the Church still holds a strong influence, with the 6th ray also connecting it with Spain and to a lesser extent with the United States, where Catholicism comprises close to a quarter of religious affiliations there. Through those ray relations, we also see a strong influence of the US over Spain and Italy, with Spanish and Italian culture conversely playing a very large part in American culture. There is a point to this, which will emerge as we go along.

Italy's troubles and the EU: As we proceed, and just to be clear, the EU is an Atlanticist stronghold, if not project, and nationalist elements within the EU bloc are typically ousted by the Brussels elites as soon as possible. Matteo Salvini, just mentioned, is a prime example. He rubbed the elites in Brussels up the wrong way when he was Deputy PM, talking about floating a parallel currency, about stopping migrants from entering Italy full stop and so forth. The floating currency bit was a big red flag. In the 2019 Bilderberg meeting, seen in attendance there was one Matteo Renzi, ex-PM of Italy and a neoliberal Atlanticist. He was invited. When I saw that I knew Salvini's days were numbered. Sure enough, in what could be seen as a soft coup, Renzi was one of the people behind having Salvini ousted. Since then we hear very little about Renzi in the news or on Italian political talk shows (Italians have quite a few such shows.) Conte, Italian PM, soon followed Salvini. He was replaced by Mario Draghi, [sometimes called 'Super Mario'](#) (machine translate). Draghi is a banker (former head of the ECB) and an Atlanticist. His name means 'dragons', speaking of symbolism. So, the EU Council and Washington may be temporarily relieved to have 'their people' back in place in Italy, but the Italian public has not changed its mind. Nationalist sentiments have not gone away, as seen in the polling cited above. I'll say from the outset neither Lega nor Fratelli d'Italia is my cup of tea, but neither do I wholly disagree with their policies. Suffice it to say, Italy is facing some very sober and serious choices in the immediate years ahead. And if Italian politics in the past is anything to go by, Draghi might last only a year or two at most. Who will step in then?

Uncle Sam wants you!: At the G7 and NATO summits this year, the leaders of the G7 were unanimous in their desire to 'push back' against China and especially Russia. Washington was most pleased. Of the G7 states, France, Germany, Italy and the UK all have strong Leo emphasis. But what Washington is ultimately pushing for is a *military* confrontation or some sort of naval blockade that would stifle China's progress. The Chinese, with their 1st ray soul, will most certainly not simply bow to pressure from the G7. On the Russian front, the same G7 pushback holds true for the Mediterranean, Black and Baltic Seas, as well as the Arctic Ocean. But there is a little problem with implementing such policies, especially when it comes to increasing military spending, and more pointedly sending troops off to fight some distant war for American and British interests (We'll get to those British interests as we go along here). The problem is, though the leaders express their support for Washington's desire to push back, [the respective peoples supposedly](#)

[represented by said leaders don't want any part of a war against either Moscow or Beijing](#). Recent polling in the EU shows an average of about 17% of the public would support a war against China. Those are not encouraging numbers for Washington. In Australia, younger people showed about the same level of disinterest, with older Aussies at about double that. Washington has grand hopes of being able to mobilize a Quad and NATO to go up against Russia and China militarily or to scare them into submission. The latter is just not going to happen. Australians and Europeans should be especially wary of their leaders' and Washington's motives. From the link just cited:

Washington's neo-cold war stance toward Russia and China appears to be increasingly unsustainable. The Biden administration has been able to get most US allies on board for such a policy with respect to Russia, and is obtaining some movement in that direction by many of those same governments (albeit with noticeable reluctance). But the populations in nearly all allied nations seem have no stomach for a confrontation with Russia or China. If an armed conflict erupts between the United States and either the PRC or Russia, allied governments risk repudiation by their own furious publics by backing Washington.

It is predictable that at least some of those governments will decline to commit political suicide, and will instead leave the United States to face its adversary alone. US leaders need to adopt a much more cautious, realistic estimate of sustained allied support in the event of trouble. At the moment, they are very far out on an increasingly shaky policy tree limb.

I repeat what I have said in past letters, given the preceding: There will not be another world war. We need to pressure our leaders to accept the truth – that the days of Western dominance are over. The world has changed and is moving on. We need real diplomacy now instead of threats and confrontation. Our leaders are clearly out of touch with the realities emerging on the ground and they are consistently ignoring the voices and needs of their public. What is it with the EU, then?

Some Leo synastry: Some quite revealing information comes to light when one starts comparing (looking at synastry) between national charts and organizations. Coupled with historical context, we have an insight into the EU. The EU was formed in 1993, at the height of neoliberal fervor and the 'end of history' – the Soviet Union had collapsed and the world was a unipolar order for that very brief, heady time in Washington and certain European states. It was thought at the time, among Western leaders and elites that the liberal order had finally won the day and that Russia would finally be subdued, even Balkanized. Russia's state industries were being plundered, capital flight from Russia was huge, the oligarch class arose almost overnight there and the Russian people's welfare was in a critically low state. Globalization had come to 'reform' Russia and it was hoped 'democracy' would soon follow. Well, it did eventually, but with Russian characteristics.

At the same time Russia was being 'reformed' by the Western powers and helped along the road to democracy, Europe had become unified along a single principle – neoliberal economics. A few people in EU higher society saw the opportunities presented by neoliberalism, as in the opportunity to become quite wealthy, and they pushed for the federation of EU states, along with the single currency later, used to further bind said states together. Maggie Thatcher pushed for British membership in the EU for the just-stated reasons, at least on the surface, because the bankers in the City of London saw their opportunity, too. So, to state the obvious, the EU is in one sense essentially a neoliberal, globalist project. People here on the continent are starting to see it. But there is another side to the story, too.

The NATO alliance, led by Washington, ties very neatly into the chart for the EU, as if by design. We won't go into an analysis here except for a couple of indicators salient to our discussion. NATO's Pluto sits just behind the EU Ascendant in the EU's 12th house – a very subversive influence behind the scenes. That Pluto also squares the EU Mercury, as in control of the narrative about security matters. And NATO's Saturn sits on the EU's Chiron, a constant painful reminder of Europe's past. That aspect in relationship charts is very difficult to break. There are many mutually

beneficial aspects between them, too, but the ones just mentioned are overtly controlling on the part of Washington and keep Europeans tied into the Atlanticist fold. Basically, NATO plays on Europe's fears.

When we look at the synastry between Russia and the EU ([chart](#)), the problem stands out clearly. Both Russia and the EU have the same cross of matter – Leo rising and Taurus on the Midheaven. That would ordinarily indicate a similarity in objectives, and there are many, especially when it comes to business relations. There are many business leaders in both Russia and the EU who long for good relations between the two, but then other factors present themselves. Russia's Venus/Pluto conjunction sits on the EU Mercury/Mars/Pluto stellium, in turn square to the EU Saturn and opposite the EU Moon. Russia is like the continually frustrated lover in the relationship, constantly denied affection by the Saturn of the EU. The Russians have frequently made overtures to their EU partners, as the Russians state the relationship, only to be knocked back time and again. The Russian Pluto evokes distrust from within the EU leadership. It is a very difficult dynamic to overcome. And then to top it off, Russia's Saturn squares the EU Sun, which causes the Sun person/nation to view the Saturn person as too controlling or even oppressive. And then, there is also an aspect between Russia's Saturn and the EU's Chiron, again reminding the EU states of old wounds, even though things have changed dramatically in this century in the outlook of the Russian Federation, and in a much more positive direction. Basically, the Russians just want cordial, respectful if not friendly relations with the EU and to do mutually beneficial business between them. There are many people in Europe who feel the same toward Russia.

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The NATO/EU synastry ([chart](#)) only looks worse for relations between the EU and Russia, but also reveals some fascinating insights in terms of the evolution of NATO-Russia relations ([chart](#)) and by extension, Russia-EU relations. Russia's Saturn squares the NATO horizon and Scorpio Ascendant, while Russia's Ascendant literally sits in the crosshairs of the NATO Sun/Pluto conjunction, as well as being at the midpoint of that conjunction. The latter for Russia represents a crisis of self-preservation, as well as being persistently presented with the ruthlessness of NATO forces, represented in their Sun/Pluto conjunction. Russia, with her Leo personality and Leo rising, has taken up the challenge and has [almost produced an impregnable air defense against any NATO air or missile attacks](#), which NATO would require for any military actions against Russia. As Russia's security interests (Saturn) were confronted by NATO's expansion (horizon axis, as in purpose and open aggression), Russia armed herself in self-defense. It shares these defenses with China.

Now, given Russia's progress in self-defense, it has effectively check-mated NATO. NATO forces can threaten Russia all they like, but Russia controls the narrative and direction now. Some readers might disagree, but recent activities and efforts by NATO have shown this to be true. NATO dare not directly attack Russia. The bottom line here is that until NATO dissolves, relations between Russia and Europe look to only further deteriorate in the near future. It will be a war of words, but thankfully not a hot war. The said dissolution of NATO may well happen, too, and really must if we are to see any peace in the world. Otherwise, we will simply have to endure endless propaganda and posturing along with a standoff. What these last four paragraphs point to is that Europe is to be used by Washington as a cudgel at most and a hedge at least against Russia, while Washington focuses its energies in East Asia.

The EU, UK and neoliberalism: In rounding out our look at tensions in Europe before we move on, the largest part of the tensions can be traced back to economic woes, especially since 2008. The EU, being an Atlanticist project, is constrained by the same economic policies that have disrupted the UK and US over the past 18 months, and which are particularly plaguing the UK now. The UK is now going more steeply down [the Thatcherite-neoliberal path](#) (video), with further blows to the NHS (the [Health and Care Bill](#), which was passed while the UK was in UEFA fever), its [passage of an anti-protest bill](#) (the government is trying to spin this as a '[modest reset of the scales](#)'), food

shortages due to Brexit (we don't see food shortages here on the Continent) and a growing list of public grievances. A growing number of the public are not stupid. Yet, it would come as no surprise at all if a conservative government were to be re-elected yet again the next time elections come around. The UK is becoming more and more like the United States now that it is out of the EU. And that is not a cause for celebration. People's freedoms and standard of living in the UK are being eroded and the nation more divided within itself. And increasingly its public services are being closed and its infrastructure privatized. That is neoliberalism in action. Are workhouses to return to the UK?

The EU is in a similar position, yet moving more slowly down that path. There is a [collective blindness, even insanity in the EU leadership, and hubris](#) represented in its Leo ascendant. It is further shown in the Mars/Saturn square in the EU chart. It is a form of, "Do as I say, not as I do". Germany essentially controls the manufacturing base in the EU, with Berlin's Leo personality at the helm, using the cheap labor in the shops across Eastern European EU states as a labor pool. The single currency and the manner in which the financial and banking system in the bloc is organized gives Germany an outsized say in what happens to the bloc financially.

Clean hands and car washes: Italy in particular has suffered under the neoliberal system, as has Greece. At one time Italy had the 4th-largest economy in the world prior to neoliberalism, but lost it in what amounted to a coup in the '[Mani Puliti](#)' (Clean Hands) affair. It was called "[the pillage of Italy](#)" and was yet another, but subdued, American regime change operation, similar to Brazil's 'Lava-Jato' (Car Wash) corruption investigations. Both operations saw the purging of any socialist tendencies in the respective nations and the ousting of once-powerful political parties and figures. Italy, like Brazil, has been transformed – much to the desires of Washington and a few EU states – into an Atlanticist vassal. Ostensibly, Mani Puliti was put forward as a purge of corruption and nepotism in Italy, which actually was endemic at the time, but that was not the real purpose behind it. Mani Puliti also led to Italy privatizing its nationalized infrastructure, with a subsequent fall in its economic power, placing the nationalized assets in the hands of foreign powers and putting it firmly under the thumb of the Atlanticist bloc. Italy and Brazil both share Leo as their soul expressions. There is also a large Italian expat community in southern Brazil. We might wonder at the collective soul expressions of those nations and their shared experiences. [Lula, who was purged in Lava-Jato, is back](#) on the political scene in Brazil. Italy has a long way to go before it is free of the Anglo-Saxon thumb, and NATO needs to go first, but the stirrings of freedom are starting to bubble beneath the surface. We will look at this more in future letters.

There is a sort of Leo troika now in Europe, formed by France, Italy and Berlin now that London is no longer in the bloc. All three nations want better relations with Russia, which will not fly well in the US or UK. None of the three in the troika will likely have renewed relations until the governing setup in Brussels and their apparent rule-by-pronouncement is replaced by a more diplomatic approach. The two main problems are the influence behind the scenes by the US and the common currency, added to by the consensus-based mechanism whereby single small states can veto the needs of larger states. But as with nations throughout history, economics makes and breaks states. And wars and overextension of forces are often the cause. The Thatcher-Reagan experiment in financialized economics will end soon, and with it probably the main control the US has over Europe, along with NATO. If that sounds like wishful thinking, wait until enough nations start bypassing the SWIFT system and see what happens. Eastern European states would likely be the first to buck that system, followed by the Mediterranean states, given their growing turn to the East in the bloc. And just to leave Europe with a few indicators, there are currently solar arc directions to the EU Venus and Ascendant, along with a few that will really shake things up in the project over the next two years. Changes are coming for the EU, signaled by Nord Stream, the pandemic, the cancel-culture wars taking shape and the hubris in the halls of EU power. That, coupled with the

present troubles in the US.....well, use your imagination. I will be posting on what is taking place in both places over the next months.

India, Pakistan and Leo: Looking outside of Europe, to be able to focus more of its energies in East Asia, Washington is seeking to gain more support among [Quad members](#), with [Japan slowly building toward a possible armed confrontation with China](#). India wavers in that respect, having already fought a war with China in Ladakh and several other skirmishes afterward. Of interest, referring back to the Cuban missile crisis, [the Sino-Indian War was also fought in 1962](#), which India lost. China and India have on-again-off-again relations, but recently have enjoyed reasonable business ties. But India is still very wary of the friendship between Pakistan and China. The Indian relationship with Pakistan has been troubled from the start, and was actually [the result of British partition](#), too hastily implemented, and happening shortly after WWII when Britain was reeling under heavy war debts, rationing and trying to rebuild itself, unable to sustain its empire. The US should take note. To blame strains in relations between India and Pakistan on the British would be false, though. There were large internal tensions in what was British India as India struggled for its independence from Britain, and with Britain in a weakened state at the time and losing its empire, the partition was seen as a way of resolving what was an increasingly violent atmosphere.

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Partition was not as simple as the resolution of a religious conflict. That was one side of it, of course, but there were many factions involved. See also [here](#) and [here](#). The problems between the two nations are still ongoing and very difficult of resolution. As for Australia's role in the Quad, it would be more logistical and intelligence-related, being a member of the 'Five Eyes'. There is little Australia could actually commit militarily in a war in the South China Sea. But the government is [happy to spend billions building submarines](#). 'Australian jobs', you know. It's a move geared toward domestic politics and a show of support for the US, rather than being of any real military use. India and Pakistan get a mention here because they both have Leo Sun in the national charts, and both nations have a strong sense of nationalism. They are also both involved in Washington's conflicts with China. And that brings up a recent story – the end of our 'endless war' in Afghanistan and what that will actually mean.

Afghanistan: There are many national charts floating around for Afghanistan. Given their resilience and fierce independence, it would not come as any surprise to find Leo as Sun or rising in their horoscope, either a national or synthetic horoscope. That aside, the US is finally pulling out of Afghanistan, after twenty years, [trillions spent, hundreds of thousands](#) dead and basically nothing accomplished according to the stated goals of the US from the start. Along with that war, the accompanying ['War on Terror' has led to spike in opioid-related deaths](#), now an epidemic, with America's vets at ground zero in the crisis. That is directly connected with Afghanistan, too, via its poppy production, which has really bloomed since the US occupation. Now that the US is withdrawing, the Taliban are very quickly taking control of the country. It would appear to be a *fait accompli*. [The three unstated reasons for the US presence in Afghanistan](#) would now appear to be a moot point – to be able to disrupt the BRI of China, to be able to destabilize China using Uighur terrorists, and to be able to secure the nuclear stockpile of Pakistan if the situation there collapses, given the unstable situation in that nation. And now, even though Rumsfeld is dead, his war policies live on, even though [he was known as a disastrous Secretary of Defense](#).

With Afghanistan quickly falling into the hands of the Taliban, what is that likely to mean? To start, the Taliban of today are not the same crowd as we saw in 2001. They are not sheltering Al Qaida, for instance. There are now [very serious diplomatic efforts being made by the Taliban](#) regarding Russia, China and Afghanistan's neighbors. There is talk of extending the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor up into Afghanistan, for instance, making it a part of China's BRI. The Taliban are after two main things, really: to end the occupation and to establish an Islamic republic, probably more along the lines of Iran, but based in Sunni Islam. They do not want conflict. They

want to be embraced. They have stated flatly they have no interest in invading any of their neighbors. They would also end the opium production in the country. That would be something to watch in terms of the opioid crisis in the US. Afghanistan faces a very bumpy road ahead, given American designs on China. But in the longer term, we are also probably looking at a more stable situation in Central Asia once the politicking settles out. One thing for certain is that when the Russians and Chinese cement deals with the new Taliban government, terrorism in Afghanistan will not be allowed. Afghanistan is an observer state in [the SCO](#). Once their situation settles, [they would naturally become full members](#), more fully integrating them into the Asian project that is taking shape among those nations. But Washington still has plans to keep the current government in Afghanistan alive. The Taliban have their own ideas on that one.

The Taliban have stated the Ghani government has to go. They see it as a US puppet regime. Biden has stated that if Kabul looks like it will fall, [the US will employ 'over the horizon' measures](#) to push back the Taliban gains, meaning drone attacks. But with no US troops on the ground, those measures would seem to be unrealistic. The Taliban have also stated there are to be no NATO forces in Afghanistan. There has been talk in Washington of the Turks having a role in the security of Afghanistan. Given the Turks are the main party who has radicalized the Uighur terrorists, Turkish presence in Afghanistan would be a red line to both Russia and China. The Taliban have rejected any idea of Turkish forces being on Afghan soil anyway, as Turkey is a NATO country. And at the same time as all this is taking place in Afghanistan, John “the ‘Stache” Bolton is spearheading a hoped-for regime change project in Turkey, which would see Erdogan ousted and another US puppet regime installed there. Apparently, Washington sees Erdogan as somewhat problematic now. So, given all the preceding, we see the Biden administration is really no different from any other US administration when it comes to foreign policy. Personalities of leaders aside, Presidents change, but policy remains in DC.

Afghanistan made new again?: The developments taking place in Afghanistan are an important piece to consider. Firstly, it means NATO has been defeated there, and the Global South is taking notice. The Americans simply turned off the lights one night at Bagram Air Base (the largest military air base there) and [snuck out before dawn and before notifying the Afghan authorities](#). Have a read of the article. They left quite a bit of interesting booty for looters, including [small arms and ammunition](#). [The place was a small city](#), with all the comforts of home for Americans. The amount of money spent on that base, reading about what was there (there is also [video](#), in Afghan language), is staggering, and we just up and left. It was hardly a dignified exit. It is what an unscrupulous renter would do if arrears on rent and in danger of eviction. That is how the exit from Bagram is being seen outside NATO. The American-backed Afghan government has been left holding the bag. The Taliban may not yet hold major cities, but that will change quickly. They already control half the country, and in a few short weeks. And, they hold the key area that links Afghanistan to China’s border. With the north of the country under Taliban control, the Ghani government has lost its main support base.

There is a new version of the [Great Game](#) emerging, and it will exclude Western powers, unless they are willing to enter into mutually beneficial (win-win) relations with Asian nations instead of seeking to control resources and outcomes. Afghanistan’s problems and challenges will be settled henceforth by Asians, Asian Russia included. This has been the goal of the SCO member states for years. The SCO itself has as its main purpose countering Western influence in the region, especially that of the United States. A quick look at [the synergy between the SCO and US](#) shows this very clearly. I won’t analyze it here, but it is plain enough to astrologers. [Pepe Escobar just gave a good roundup of the most likely outcomes](#) in the region as they stand, looking forward:

- “...a plan mixing political stability, economic and security development and a road map for infrastructure development projects.” Otherwise known as ‘nation-building’, something we have not seen in Afghanistan for the last two decades.

- “...a national reconciliation deal with the Taliban, brokered by Russia-China, with no American interference...”
- “the end of the opium-heroin ratline”
- “...a firm promise that jihadism won’t be allowed to fester. The endgame: loads of productive investment, Afghanistan is incorporated to Belt and Road and – later on – to the Eurasia Economic Union (EAEU).”

[Wang Yi’s recent statements at Dushanbe](#) are echoing many of the above points. The [joint statement of the SCO](#) (in English) posted by the Russian Federation has just confirmed all the points above. Escobar has [also given further comment](#) confirming the above points. And the Taliban agree. [They see China as a friendly country](#), for instance, and welcome them for reconstruction of Afghanistan. They have guaranteed the safety of Chinese workers coming there to work. We will probably see rapid changes in the political infrastructure of Afghanistan after all the foreign occupying forces leave. We in the West may have fears for the women in Afghanistan post-occupation. But on the other hand, their conditions have not been that great while NATO has been there. There are no illusions here: It will take decades, probably, for conditions in Afghanistan’s physical infrastructure and people’s living conditions to markedly improve, but at the same time conditions will already improve if there is peace in that land and the nation can rebuild, and on top of that, modernize. Corruption will be a big obstacle to overcome, and that will take some time to curtail, entrenched in the culture as it is. Afghanistan is still very tribal. We have probably several years at least of heavy wheeling and dealing between factions before true progress can even start. And the West will still be trying its best to throw its wrenches into the works. We can count on that, given the country’s location and the parties involved.

Old cultures reborn: There is so much more here we have not touched upon – the coming Turkish protests, the Cuban protests, the South African riots, an update on Myanmar, the JCPOA, the assassination of Moïse in Haiti and so forth. The focus in this letter has been on Leo and the quickly changing landscape in the Middle East and Central Asia, some of which also involves Leo. But what about the opening lines in this letter? How do they apply here? Many of the cultures that make up the bulk of the nations discussed in this letter are quite ancient, as in China, India/Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, many European states such as England, France, Italy, Germany and Russia. The old Silk Road, for instance, is re-emerging – the old made new again. It was a good idea in the past and connected people and cultures in business and in a positive sense, regardless of how the West casts the BRI now. Old cultures, like Iran, are taking the best of their ancient heritage and remaking themselves along new lines – the same with Russia and the same everywhere, really. But the Leo influence in nations and in people really brings it forward. And here in Italy, old ruins have been remade to new purpose. The 2,000 year old arena in Verona is now a major entertainment and concert venue. I heard the opera *La traviata* there some years ago. Fabulous. With Rome’s Leo personality and Italy’s Leo soul, they know how to remake their old cultural icons. Many nations do.

When in the process of reevaluating one’s life, which involves acknowledging the past, taking the best bits from it and building on those strengths, what is old is made new. Leo types have a particular penchant for this type of activity – and doing it with style, the flair for which few other signs are known. And in doing so, new memories are born. What was once maybe an old relic takes on new life. The form becomes radiant, becoming fit for the times and at the same time reminding us of our heritage and why it is right to try to preserve the best parts of it, and to keep it sovereign. Sometimes a new government is needed to revive a dying culture, to bring it into usefulness for the present generation and into future generations. Have a look at the Leo nations and the cultures therein undergoing such a transformation. Some of them are in the depths. But though they struggle, the signs of new life are there.

For those peoples who have overcome their dark periods, their progress is rapid. Who can say what will evolve from Brazil, from a troubled Europe, from Leo nations in Asia, from a stumbling UK

temporarily blindsided by the Taurean materialism and memories of empire from the past, for instance? No matter what emerges from such struggles, the resulting expression will be unique, sovereign, magnetic and will lead their regions, each in their own way. And yet, some experiments will fail. A failure is never a tragedy to the conscious person, though. It is a spur to greater investigation, to better outcomes. Musicians and entertainers make mistakes all the time as they ply their trade, but those are just part of the path to a stellar performance in the end, when practice becomes capacity. Therein is the key to success – persistence, correction of errors and the thrill of success when obstacles are overcome. This is Leo. It is also to be human. We could all use a little Leo in our lives. Leo is the sign of the accomplished artist, drawing the crowd, centering attention. We'll leave this letter with a song lyric, too, as we have done sometimes in the past. It reflects a Leo thought, as well as some thoughts on the present, paraphrasing:

Be a star on your own
 Don't throw the past away
 You might need it some rainy day
 Dreams can come true again
 When everything old is new again

Leo blessings,

16 July 2021

Malvin

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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 be added to or deleted from the mailing list, let me know.

¹ *The Bible*, 2 Corinthians 5:17

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9FfI4-oRDo>

³ Bailey, Alice A., *Esoteric Astrology*, (1936) Lucis Publishing, NY, NY, p. 68

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 296

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 86

⁶ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology II*, p. 169

⁷ Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. 297, 298

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 666

⁹ Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, p. 201

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 431 and 474

¹¹ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, p. 506