

AND THE NEXT PRESIDENT IS ... PETE BUTTIGIEG?

A feathery astro-political exploration

For a long time, I have been following what is happening in the United States. From time to time, I also like to stay there. And in the past, my wish was even to live there. Which is just to say: I am a lover: of the country, the people and the values that traditionally underpin this country, such as individual freedom and the absence of class consciousness common in Europe; it is not where you come from that counts, but who you are and what you do. And YES, of course I know there is also another side.

Speaking of which...

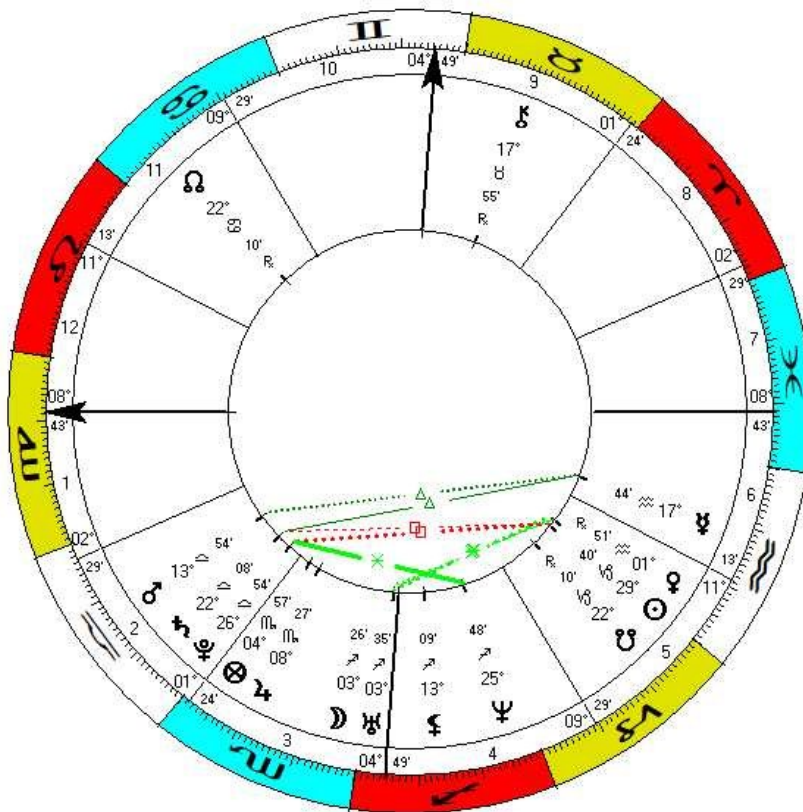
Iowa and the presidential election

One of the peculiarities of America is that 'surprising' presidents are elected very regularly, often including candidates from outside the usual political channels. Does this wine need another wreath in the Trump-era? The transition from Obama to Trump not only marked a transition from a Democratic to a Republican president, it also involved a total shift in style and culture: from the introverted, cool and rational Obama (Aquarius ascendant) to the frenzied, OTT (over-the-top) Trump (Leo ascendant). What these men have in common, however, is that not a penny was initially given for their chances as president the moment they declared their candidacy: Obama was too unknown, too young and too inexperienced, they said, not to mention: African-American! Trump was a clown, a tabloid cartoon character and not to be taken seriously at all. Well, the rest is history.

What both cases make clear is that a lot is possible in US presidential elections. And that is, indeed, an understatement. At the time of writing (early November 2019), the Democratic candidates are in the race to win the nomination for their party to take on Trump as the presidential candidate a year from now (November 2020). Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are the front runners in the run-up to

the primaries, which traditionally start in the state of Iowa in February 2020. A poll released this week showed that a fourth candidate might do well in this state. And anyone who follows US politics knows: whoever scores in Iowa has a serious chance of becoming a presidential candidate (because of the momentum of winning, the subsequent media coverage and the money from donors that then becomes available). I am talking about Pete Buttigieg, or Mayor Pete as Americans also call him, because he is mayor of South Bend, a town in Indiana (population about 100,000).

Pete Buttigieg
Natal Chart
19 Jan 1982, di
21:00 EST +5:00
South Bend, Indiana
41°N 41° 08' W 15'
Geocentric
Tropical
Placidus
Mean Node



Mayor Pete as the anti-Trump

Mayor Pete is in many (as in: very many) ways, the opposite of Trump: he is totally unknown, young (only 37 years old), modern (he met his partner via a dating app), army veteran, and he comes across as extremely modest and 'factual' (virgin ascendant). The fact that he is married to a man makes many political analysts think, he is not going to stand a chance. If America is not yet ready for a woman as president, then certainly not for a gay man. But as said, America regularly elects surprising people as president. Besides: People elected a black president 11 years ago, also considered unthinkable back then.

Let's put Buttigieg under the microscope. Bring out the astrology! Unfortunately, we don't have a birth time for Mayor Pete. We only know, from his book, that he was born in the evening. In any case, this means that the moon is at the first degrees of Sagittarius. Virgo is most likely to be on the ascendant (from 20:15 to 22:50). Sun is in the sign of Capricorn (end of the sign). I use 9pm (mid-evening) as an example time (see horoscope).

The first thing that strikes me about this horoscope (a fact that does not change if you rewind or advance his birth time by 2 hours) is the fact that all the planets are nocturnal, below the horizon. This symbolism resonates with me. It is related to the theme of invisibility (something is there, but you can't see it). At the moment, Pete is still relatively out of sight of the national media, because at this stage they mainly focus on candidates who are already nationally known. In the national polls, we find Pete in the rear (at 7% against, for example, Biden who stands at 27% nationally), but in Iowa, where the first primaries are in February 2020, he is in second place, just behind Warren (with an average score of 18% and a trend line that is clearly upwards (source: www.realclearpolitics.com)). Iowa's result is almost always a game changer: whoever comes out on top there -eventually out of nowhere- has the wind in their sails afterwards. Established names who disappoint there can often pack up after that; the media/money dynamic is going to work against them.

With the Sun in Capricorn, ascendant in Virgo and all the planets nocturnal, everything indicates that Mayor Pete is working very hard in (relative) silence, out of sight of the national media, to build a solid base among democrats in Iowa. A strategy also previously tried by Obama. Whether this will succeed, of course, remains to be seen, but IF he manages to come first or second across the line in Iowa, he is, in my opinion, a very serious candidate for the next stage. Not just because of the aforementioned media/money dynamic that will then get going, but also for another reason. Mayor Pete has much that argues for him in US politics: he is sensible, attended the right universities, is church-going, a war veteran, says sensible things, is young, fresh, down to earth and above all: a moderate democratic, someone who can be acceptable to conservative voters. However.... he is also gay. Is America ready for that? If he wins or comes close in Iowa, the unexpected answer to this question is: yes. Iowa is a rural state in the Midwest, known for its corn and traditionally conservative (this goes for the majority of Democrats living there too!). I would think: if he can win there, he's in. After all, for a democratic candidate, it is not about being popular in urban states on the coast (they win there anyway), but about conquering the heartland, the conservative states 'in between'. So Mayor Pete seems well on his way.

Buttigieg, Trump and the horoscope of America

What kind of man is it? At first glance, the hardworking, quiet force in the background, seems more a figure for German politics than for American politics, where people (also) like extraversion and show. In the past, optimism has proven to be an important trait for presidential candidates. Trump was an important exception. Now you could see optimism as a generically important trait for politicians (although you wouldn't say that in these times), but in America, optimism, the American version of 'wir schaffen das', is a deep and important cultural value. Anyone who, as a European, has ever worked with Americans will recognise this: the optimism, often bordering on naivety, to get things done, addressed or improved. In the horoscope often used to denote the birth moment of the United States (the approval by Congress of the Declaration of Independence on 4 July 1776 in Philadelphia), we see Sagittarius on the ascendant.

As an aside: on the horoscope of America (and Trump)

English astrologer Nick Campion has sometimes claimed, with force of argument, that the US horoscope cannot be correct, but in my experience it is (nevertheless) extremely useful and appropriate. We see Sagittarius on the Ascendant, representing, among other things, boundless optimism and the worldwide propagation of certain (democratic) values. The latter also refers to the Moon in Aquarius, which also emphasises egalitarianism in cultural terms (Lincoln in the

Gettysburg address in 1863: "All men are created equal") and having a penchant for change and innovation (think of America as the cradle of technological innovation). In addition, the strong Cancer energy stands out, with Sun in Cancer on cusp 8, among others. I know of no other country that is so obsessed with its own security (even long before 9/11) and where the culture is so marked by hidden fears, e.g. fears of everything foreign, of apocalypse, of conspiracy, etc. Look e.g. at what Hollywood produces, but also at the gun debate, to get an impression of the American psyche in this regard. An underlying feeling of insecurity pervades American culture, a feeling, by the way, that Trump's personal horoscope seamlessly reflects (with his planets in Cancer, especially the conjunction Venus/Saturn which is in close conjunction with Mercury in the eighth house of the country's horoscope). Trump has, in my view, with his personal Cancer theme (which with him is -also- 'under the bonnet' of his polemical exterior), firmly activated the 8th house theme in the country's horoscope. 'The Wall' being the most concrete elaboration of this theme: the armour that must protect against the danger coming from outside.

Although Trump clearly touches a different chord in America's horoscope (that of the Cancer theme), Mayor Pete might be able to re-activate the strings that Americans ALWAYS appear to be sensitive to: those of hope and confidence in the future (Sagittarius ascendant) and the urge for change and renewal (Moon in Aquarius). Pete's moon in Sagittarius is at 7 degrees from the ascendant of the nation's chart, in the 12th house. Although the orb is somewhat wide (7 degrees), I still see this position as favourable. It represents new beginnings. With Uranus in close conjunction with his Moon, this new beginning is also marked by renewal and change. This can take all sorts of forms with Pete, but the fact that he is gay will definitely do as a possible manifestation of this.

Many great moments in America's history have emphasised that 'anything is possible', a boundless optimism that often goes hand in hand with emancipation and innovation, think of the Declaration of Independence (granting human rights), of Martin Luther King with his "I have a dream" speech and more recently Obama with his campaign focused on change. At first glance, Pete Buttigieg may not be a very obvious candidate for the presidency, but in the light of American history AND looking at the synnastry of his horoscope with that of America, he may yet have more going for him than you might initially think. So keep an eye on this man.

Now just wait and see, how far Mayor Pete is going to get. If he advances to the second round, I will write a sequel to this article and delve deeper into his birth chart. To be continued, maybe.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ben Rovers works as a professional astrologer in the Netherlands. He runs a practice in Nijmegen. He is founder of *The Hermetic Cosmos | School of Astrology*. He writes and speaks regularly on astrological, cosmological and esoteric topics. His main interest is Hermetic Astrology (a soul-centred form of astrology that connects insights from Hermetic texts with astrology). Get in touch via www.benrovers.com.