**Pluto/Neptune**

**Neptune/Pluto, a Five Hundred Year Epoch**

Neptune/Pluto takes about 500 years to move from longitudinal conjunction to longitudinal conjunction in the sky.

Transforma­tion on a mass scale takes place when this conjunction occurs. Neptune/Pluto is one of the most powerful synods. (Note: The average synodic cycle of NE/PL lasts for 492.328 years. The most recent one began, depending on the orb you want to use, in August 1878 (PL 25° TA, NE 10°’ TA) and continued until May, 1902 (PL 17°GE, NE 30° GE), when Neptune left Gemini, a period of about twenty-five years. By June of 1889, Neptune and Pluto were within 3° of conjunction (PL 5° GE, NE 2° GE); by June, 1890, they were within 1°; and the conjunction became exact in May, 1891, at 7°GE. This conjunction stayed within 1° orb for four years, from 1890 through 1893. The two planets remained loosely conjunct until April, 1897 (PL 12° GE, NE 18° GE).

This synod places its stamp on all human activity taking place in a five hundred year span of history. Let us review some of what happened in those years.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/sigmundFreud210.jpg)

Sigmund Freud

**1878-1902** In the 1890′s, perception of reality was undergoing a major transformation. On the level of mind, modern psychology was born with the theory of the unconscious. In 1895, Sigmund Freud, the Viennese doctor, published ***Studies in Hysteria***, a major break­through in the study of the human mind. Freud founded the disciplines of psychoanalysis and psychiatry and transformed psychology. William James, a psychologist at Harvard University, who in 1890 published ***The Principles of Psychology***, another landmark in the field.

In other areas, this synod activated a flurry of discovery and invention around the turn of the century. X-rays were discovered by

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Tsiolkovsky.jpg)

Tsiolkovsky, who developed rocket science

William Roentgen (1895). Mr. Diesel patented the first internal combustion engine (1892). The first moving picture, described as a kinetoscope, was developed by Thomas Edison (1894). Radio transmission and reception was invented by Marconi (1891). In 1892, Alexander Bell invented the telephone; the first canned foods were introduced, and rayon, a synthetic fiber, was developed. In 1893, Henry Ford designed and marketed his Model T automobile, using mass production. Karl Benz in Germany manufactured the Mercedes. In 1895, in Russia, Tsiolkovsky formulated the principle of rocket propulsion. In 1890, in London, the first station for the generation of electric power was constructed; and within the same decade, in New York City, Nicholas Tesla introduced alternating current generators, making electric power transmission available over vast distances.

When NE/PL conjoined America’s 8°Uranus in Gemini (1776 chart) and inconjuncted its natal Eris, an American technological revolution swept the world. Human civilization was given a new source of cheap power, a new mode of transportation, and new machines of perception, including the radio, the telephone, the moving picture, the typewriter. At this time, America gained ascendancy as a world-wide economic power. The consciousness of people began to change. It seemed possible to do more things. Public education was introduced in Europe and America.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Nikita_Khrushchev_1960230.jpg)

Nikita Kruschev at the height of his power, 1960, in the UN

At this time, many political leaders were born, who went on to radically restructure the politics  of nations. They all carried this synod in their natal charts. Included were Adolph Hitler (NE O°GE, PL 4°GE), Dwight Eisenhower, (NE 6° GE, PL 7°GE), Charles De Gaulle, who led the French resistance in World War II and later governed France (NE 5° GE, PL 7°GE), Mao Tse Tung (December 26, 1893), who transformed China (NE 11°GE, PL 9°GE), and Nikita Khrushchev (April 15, 1894), premier of the the Soviet Union, and a major player in the Second World War (NE I1°GE, PL 9° GE).

Other historic personages born with the conjunction of the NE/PL have had a major effect on the evolution of the human race, for good or ill. These include political figures Ho Chi Minh (19 May 1890) in Vietnam, J. Nehru (14 November 1889) in India, and David Ben Gurion (16 October 1886) in Israel. Spiritual teachers include J. Krishnamurti (May 12, 1895), (Yogananda January 5, 1893), and Meher Baba (February 25, 1894). The philosopher, Aldous Huxley (26 July 1894), was born under the conjunction, as were J.P. Getty (December 15, 1892), and Joseph Kennedy (September 6, 1888), each of whom built Plutonian fortunes.

Chief Justice Earl Warren (March 19, 1891), who revolutionized the Supreme Court in America, was also born with the synod.

At this time humanity’s perception of reality, its political structures, its arts and sciences, its originality and inventions, were transmuted, moving to a higher level. My favorite representative music of this era would be Gustav Mahler’s (b. 7 July 1860) *1stSymphony*, which premiered in 1889: Every note oozes death and rebirth.

One would have to travel back to the beginning of the Renaissance to discover similar change and upheaval. The old forms were dying. Within a very few years, the European powers, as they were then structured, would be a memory—no more Russian Empire ruled by a Czar, no more Austrian Empire, no Kaiser ruling Germany, and the British Empire, so prosperous and wealthy after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, well, it would sink further and further into shadows.  Colonialism, whether in India, or Southeast Asia, or in the Mid-East, or in Africa or South America, was soon to be a legacy of the past.

The 1890 conjunction was the sixth which has occurred since the triple conjunction that happened in the sixth century B.C. This brief review of all of the NE/PL synods occurring in history starts with the more recent, proceeding backwards in time to the sixth century B.C.

**1388-1413 A.D**. The previous NE/PL synod was exact from 1398 A.D. to 1402 A.D. at 2° & 3° of Gemini. These dates, from the end of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the fifteenth century, place us at the inception of the Renaissance.

**A definition of the Renaissance:**  
Let us therefore use the word Renaissance in the perfectly neutral sense to denote a particular period of time, roughly the years from the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century to the early seventeenth century, and not only in Italy but in all of Europe. We can … understand much of this period as the crisis time of medieval civilization; we can also see it as a period of creativity and new beginnings….as a period of transition between one distinctive civilization and another. Looked at in this last perspec­tive, the Renaissance was the beginning of early modem Europe… [and] we can go further and say that Renaissance men built the foundations for the Europe which endured until the second half of the nineteenth century. (Since the two world wars a new sort of civilization whose contours are still only dimly discernable).

*[From Garraty & Gay, eds.,* *The Columbia History of the World (New York: Harper and Row, 1986) p 491]*

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/450px-Dante_Statue.jpg)

Dante

The late fourteenth and early fifteenth century NE/PL synod introduced the Renaissance. In Italy, in the early fourteenth century, civilization was already reawakening. In 1307 A.D., under the combined influence of a Saturn/Neptune, a Saturn/Uranus, and of course a Uranus/Neptune, Dante published his *Divine Comedy*; and Petrarch (1304-1374), the celebrated Renaissance poet, was born in 1304. UR/NE was exact in 1307 A.D. in 13° Scorpio, as were SA/NE and SA/UR. Other UR/NE synods have occurred, but this one marked one of the great openings of the human intellect, a flowering of the human spirit. *It was probably all these four synods together that activated the Italian Renaissance.*

The beginning of the Renaissance signaled a dying out of old structures. Specifically, this meant the collapse of feudal power, an end to the life and death authority of the lord over every human being in his domain. It also signified the collapse of the power of the church over the hearts of men, over their science, their art, and how learning was applied.

The conjunction of Pluto and Neptune is often a quiet time during the exact conjunction period. Apparent mass changes don’t become evident until Neptune is about 30° ahead of Pluto (q.v. World War I beginning Aug 4, 1914). During this quiet period of transformation, the human mind is inspired with new ideas. These ideas have the potential to take our species into totally new directions, hopefully headed on an upward spiral. Movies and the radio were born right at the conjunction: It would only be in the teens and twenties that they would begin to exert their vast influence on the collective mind.

Even so, key events sometimes take place which exert a profound impact on all those living at the time.



Contemporary depiction of Jan Hus going up in flames.

An example of a catalyzing event from around the time of the **1400 A. D. NE/PL synod** was the execution by burning at the stake of the Bohemian humanist and priest, Jan Hus. This thinker was a follower of John Wycliff, a religious reformer and translator of the Bible into modern English. Hus’ writings, orations and sermons circulated around Europe, and represented a new humanism, an opening of the spirit, a rebirth of mystic Christianity. There were like-minded advanced intellects in Europe who revered the thought and teaching of Jan Hus. When he was condemned by the Council of Constance (1415) as a heretic and put to a fiery death at the stake, the Church helped to destroy its own power over the minds of some of the greatest intellects of Europe. This is one way the old order always destroys itself making way for the new.

An event is first created in our thoughts; its seeds lie first in the mind. The Church was appallingly powerful. It had sovereign command over the human mind (and the human body) for over a thousand years. If it hadn’t lost its power, there might have been no Renaissance and another thousand years of Dark Ages.

A change in history on a mass level begins with a change in attitude, in what human beings believe. The Great Schism (1378-1417) was an argument between two cardinals who each declared themselves Pope. This helped to effect the change in people’s thinking about the Church. Like the execution of Hus, this Schism helped to destroy the Church’s authority; it liberated peoples’ minds from its control. On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther, a Catholic priest outraged at the corruption he had observed for years taking place in the Church, posted his objections, called ***The 95 Theses***, onto the door of the Palast Church in Wittenberg, Germany. This act marked the beginning of the Reformation. Astrologically, Neptune had moved into the septile phase with Pluto (PL 2°CAPRICORN 12′, NE 21° AQUARIUS 57′), plus a Pluto/Saturn synod, plus a Uranus/Sun oppositon. The septile aspect has religious and spiritual connotations, but being in the Crescent phase, its energies demand an active release from the past in order to re-form into something new.

It is just such events that the astro-historian needs to pluck out of history.

During the NE/PL those institutions of power, classes of people, including associations, political parties and other groups, who have become corrupt in their rule, who yet cling to power, are cast down and destroyed. Following that experience much that is new can enter into the political institutions and religions of mankind.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Leonardo_self.jpg)

Famous self portrait of Leonardo

It is an almost impossible task to describe what the human race was given in the Renaissance. Leonardo Da Vinci (b. April 15, 1452) refounded science. His investigation and research took discovery and invention beyond even what the Greeks had achieved. Both Leonardo and Raphael (b. April 6, 1483) took visual art to a hitherto unknown level. William Shakespeare raised the written word to the level only rivaled by The Old Testament. In their political institutions and laws, men once more, since the ancient Roman republic and early Greek city states, developed conventions of freedom and the rule of law. This was an important conducement to human creativity.

Other astrologic influences helped to bring about the Renaissance. Roughly opposed to the NE/PL, a Saturn/Uranus synod (12° Sagittarius) helped give this era science and technology, this is possibly why the use of printing was developed. NE/PL occurred for the first time in astrologic Gemini: Mind was being developed in ways that had never happened before.

The ruling energy, however, was the Neptune/Pluto: It was this force that dissolved the power of the Church and obliterated feudalism, leaving in the rubble of what was destroyed likelihood for the growth of new structures.



Alfred the Great at Winchester

**892-917 A.D.** Deep in the Middle Ages, a NE/PL occurred. This synod became exact in 905 A.D. (28° TA). Much change and transformation occurred at this time. The ancient Roman province of Spain was ruled by the Arabs, and under Abd ar Rahman III (b. 7 Jan. 891-961 A.D.) experienced a growth of the human spirit, a mini-Renaissance called the Golden Age of Spain. The Tang Dynasty in China was overrun and collapsed in 907 A.D. Alfred the Great (b. 23 April 871) was king of England during this period.

**400-425 A.D**. This NE/PL synod, which was exact at 23° TA in 411 A.D. and at 22° TA in 412 A.D., marked a major event in the Roman Empire. In 410 A.D., the Visigothic chieftain, Aleric, sacked the ancient city and capitol of the Empire, Rome. Pluto and Neptune were then within one degree of conjunction.

People throughout the Western Empire were shocked. For almost a thousand years, the city had never been invaded or sacked. It was a major transformative event in the collective mind of that civilization.

In the next year, 411 A.D., one of the most influential books of the era was published,***The City of God***, by St. Augustine. Much of the book countered accusations that the Roman Empire had been greatly weakened by the power of the Christian Church.

It was at the beginning of this five hundred year cycle of Neptune/Pluto that the Western Roman Empire fell. All of Europe and North Africa and parts of Asia Minor slid into a dark ages.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/GensericVandal.jpg)

Genseric the Vandal. From a 3 gm. silver coin.

Rome was again sacked in 436 A.D. by Genseric the Vandal, under the influence of the Jupiter/Pluto conjunction; and in 476 A.D., under the influence of the Saturn/Pluto conjunction, the rule of the Western Empire passed completely into the hands of the Goths in Italy and the Franks in France.

This high civilization, even then in a long decline, its science, arts, literature, and rhetoric, all died. The Eastern Empire, Byzantium, would last another thousand years.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/edwardGibbon.jpg)

Edward Gibbon, one of the world's greatest historians.

Perhaps this dissolution was not injurious to the human race as some might feel. Edward Gibbon (b. May 8, 1737) in his ***The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,***possibly the greatest history written in the 18thCentury, describes the process of decay with a microscopic clarity—the corruption of the emperors, the gradual weakening of the army and the filling of its ranks with barbarian soldiers, the loss of republican ancient freedoms, the generally benign but creatively enervating totalitarian power of the state. The system of governance—a military aristocracy supporting an emperor surrounded by a highly competent bureaucracy—had lasted for a five hundred year cycle in much the same form from when Augustus Caesar set it up. No flowering of the human spirit took place under this system; most of the great creations of antiquity date from the previous five hundred year cycle, the one that began around the time of the triple conjunction.

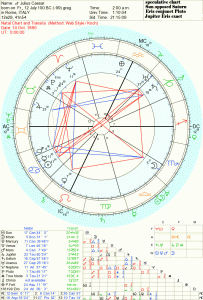
**95-70 B.C.** This NE/PL conjunction follows the exalted triple conjunction of the 6th century B.C., and was exact in 83 and 82 B.C. at 16° and 15° Taurus. This time span covers all the changes and events that led up to the Civil War between Julius Caesar and Pompey, the change from a Republic with all its ancient freedoms into an Empire.

This synod began to come into aspect little after 100 B.C., when Rome became the supreme power in its part of the world. For about five hundred years the only major challenges to the Roman Empire came from barbarian tribes, to which it eventually succumbed.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/JuliusCaesar-around-50BC.jpg)

Caius JuliusCaesar, around 50BC

When whole eras are undergoing transformation, history’s most accomplished human beings will appear on the stage. This was true in the 1890′s synod. It was true in the era of the triple conjunction. At the time of the 82 B.C. synod, the Roman Republic began a slow dissolution that would take nearly two Saturn cycles to complete. It led into a new age, the rule of the Caesars, the emperors. In the century before the birth of Christ, some of the greatest Romans were born. Those even remotely familiar with history will recognize the names of Caesar, Pompey, Cicero, Marius, Sulla, of the poets Virgil and Horace.

[](http://historicalastrology.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/julius_caesar.gif)

speculative Julius Caesar chart. Click for larger

Julius Caesar (July12, 100 B.C. to 44 B.C. Note: This is a speculative chart) was a major player in this Pluto/Neptune synod. He was not only was one of the greatest generals in history (possibly his Pluto Eris conjunction), but he also gave to Western civilization its calendar (possibly the exact sun/Saturn opposition), the Julian, which survives even today with the Gregorian revisions, and we still name the seventh month after Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar was born with Neptune closing to the conjunction of Pluto (it was 19° away, in the balsamic formation; see his speculative chart). He was one of those who used the power of the conjunction as it occurred, riding on its influence to save his civilization from the inroads of barbarian conquest. His pacification of France (Gallia) and destruction of the power of the barbarian hordes in Germany removed for centuries all external threat from the Empire. He also managed the transition from a corrupt republic that was no longer working to a benign authoritarian state that still allowed people to keep most of their freedoms and all their civilization. He placed a deep stamp on history.

Under the influence of this NE/PL synod, Julius Caesar invaded Britain (55 B.C.). For the first time this important island and its people were brought into the sway of ancient civilization.

This ends the discussion of the NE/PL synod.