

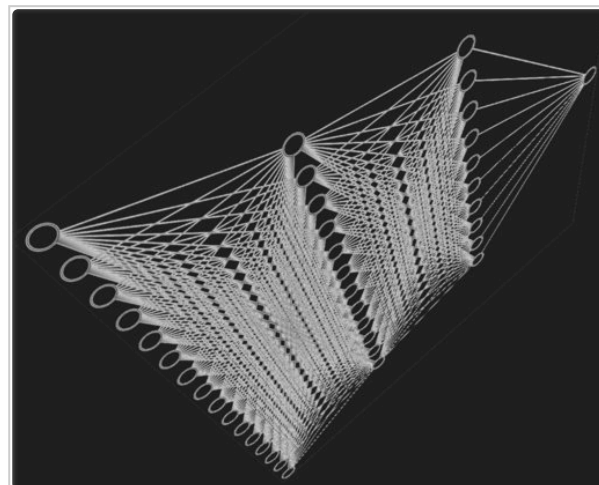
Pluto's slow shift into Aquarius 3/2023-11/2024 ... what's been happening in YOUR world?

by Anne Whitaker

Introduction: key world events/developments 2007/8 onwards

On 23rd March 2023, the planet Pluto, symbolising the most deep working and powerfully transformative energy in our solar system, entered Aquarius (for the first time since April 4th 1777). On that exact March date, we saw the beginning of the steep upward curve of public awareness of the far-reaching implications for good or ill of the Artificial Intelligence revolution. It was the day that [OpenAI connects ChatGPT to the internet](#).

Pluto is slowly completing his long purging through Capricorn which began with the 2007/8 international financial crisis. He will not fully go forward in Aquarius until the 19th November 2024, just after the next USA election. This Pluto through Capricorn transit has seen the rise of awareness of the climate crisis, a situation doubted by almost no-one as we watch wildfires raging in several parts of the world this summer, as well as widespread flooding, and chunks falling off glaciers, causing sea levels to rise dangerously.



Neural network

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It has also seen widespread sexual and other kinds of institutional abuse exposed eg in the Catholic Church, the film industry, and law enforcement agencies giving rise –amongst other changes – to the MeToo and BlackLivesMatter movements. The Middle East and Africa have been ravaged by ongoing conflicts of one kind or another. The war waged by Putin against Ukraine since the Spring of 2022 has drawn the whole world into its orbit both politically and economically. Astrologer Jessica Adams has some [in-depth commentary](#) on Pluto's previous and current transits of Pluto through Aquarius and its world-changing implications – well worth a read for those of you wishing to pursue a historical perspective in more detail.

This time, Pluto will be transiting Aquarius from first entry in March 2023 to final exit in 2043. As I discuss more fully in [Some Notes on Cycles in a Time of Crisis...](#) (Astrodienst, 2019) we are in midst of the turmoil which always results when major epochal change occurs: in this case, between the Earth Era co-inciding with the major phase of the Age of Materialism (1803-2020) and the new Air Era arising (2020-2200) whose major heralds have been an airborne pandemic completely upending our collective lives, and the exponential rise of AI technologies. By 2200, humanity will be living in a completely different world. There is even some possibly credible evidence emerging since Spring 2023 that tales from former NASA employees involving the [Purple People from Planet Zog](#) may actually have some credibility! (well, maybe...)

Pluto's Ingresses as the world turns

For a very long time, I've been fascinated by the correspondences here on Planet Earth between planetary ingresses and changes in both collective and personal life.

Here's a very brief trawl through a few headlines of the most obvious upheavals/ changes co-inciding with Pluto's ingresses since the 1880s (the years given include first entry and last exit):

Pluto through Gemini 1882-1913:

(including the 500 year epoch changing Neptune/Pluto conjunction in Gemini in 1891-2)

The invention of the telegraph (1830s-40s) allowed instant communication over vast distances for the first time, changing human history. Pluto's transit through Gemini hugely advanced that process of change following on his conjunction with Neptune in 1891-2. Sigmund Freud, born in 1856, is known as the founder of psychoanalysis. His theories on human behaviour and mental health influenced many great thinkers who came after him, his groundbreaking work eventually culminating in his major publication in 1901, "The Interpretation of Dreams."

Pluto through Cancer 1912-1939:

First World War 1914-18, rise of Nazi Germany during the 1930s under Hitler, and the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. Destruction of millions of people's lives, huge displacements of populations, and with that, destruction of any sense of home and security for a very long period.

Pluto through Leo 1937-1958:

Rise and dominance of great dictators (male) Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung. Second World War, first atomic bomb dropped in 1945 on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Korean War 1950-3, invasion of Hungary and crushing of Hungarian Revolution by Soviet Union in 1956. Cold War starts in 1947/8 just after WW2.

Pluto through Virgo 1956-1972:

Microtechnology started in the 1950s with the development of semiconductor structures that are integrated into a very small piece of microelectronic part called a chip. Computers began to proliferate in the 1960s, transforming business around the world. Rise of the Women's Movement and young people challenging institutional structures. Vietnam War/Protests.

Pluto through Libra 1971-1984:

[Economic Strategy: The Neoliberal Breakthrough, 1971–84](#) Click link for more detail on this exact overlap between major economic shifts and the above Pluto period. Major oil crisis in 1973. The Women's Liberation movement gathers momentum, and with it family breakdown, divorce rates and a generation growing up in the context of those radical social changes.

Pluto through Scorpio 1983-1995:

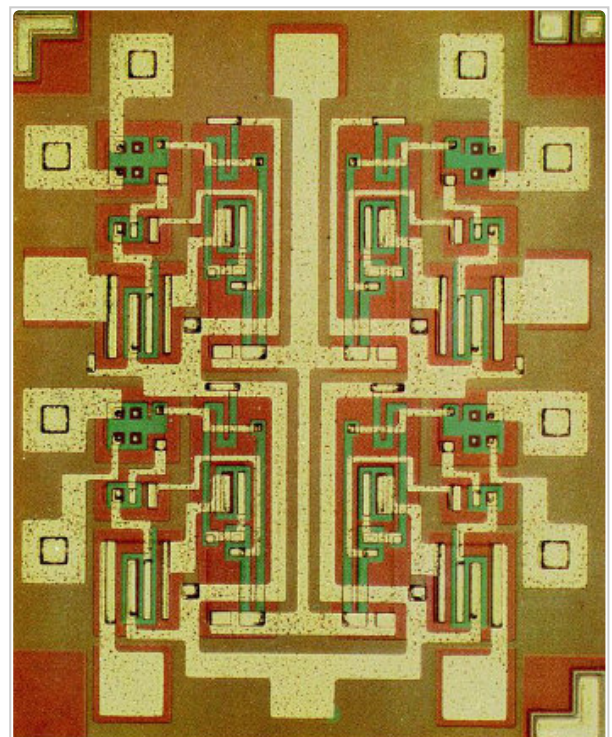
Rise of AIDS, international terrorism, further oil crisis in mid-1980s caused by political instability in the Middle East. Glasnost, Perestroika, Gorbachev's attempted reforms, increasing co-operation with West including nuclear arms control treaty between USA and USSR in 1987. Rise of democracies in Europe and gradual ending of Cold War. Berlin Wall comes down in 1989. End of Soviet Union in December 1991. Yeltsin and the rise of Russian nationalism. China emerges from the Cultural Revolution.

Pluto through Sagittarius 1995-2007/8:

Continuing war in Balkans 1991-2001. Clinton presidency of USA 1993-2001. Huge Kobe earthquake, million man march in USA, Pope John Paul II preaches in Manila to biggest audience ever of 5 million: all in the year Pluto shifted into Sagittarius in 1995. New Labour in power in UK 1997-2010. Launch of world-changing iPhone by Steve Jobs in 2007. Period of economic expansion and optimism.

Pluto through Capricorn 2008-2024:

Global financial crisis - crash only just averted - in 2008. See *also* **Introduction**. (i)



Microchip

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Pluto's Ingresses: impact on individual life

In a general essay like this, there is only so much one can say without having an individual's horoscope to hand for fine tuning. However, as a general principle, the more strongly you are connected to an outer planet by planetary aspects and/or Angles and/or Moon's Nodes, the more powerful the impact of that planet's ingress and journey through a new sign is likely to be.

My own life is a case in point. I've had the mis/good (take your pick!) fortune to be plugged in strongly to all the outer planets in general, but Pluto in particular: I have twelfth house Pluto conjunct Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus and (exactly) Saturn, all squared by Jupiter in Scorpio in the third house. It doesn't get much more Plutonian than that!

Having done a trawl through my own life, I could see that every single Pluto ingress to date had symbolised a distinctly new phase in my life.

Here we go:

I was born with Pluto in Leo along with several other planets, all in the twelfth house except Mercury (eleventh by Placidus). Creative expression and determination to engage with the world absolutely in my own individual way in the quest for meaning, has run through everything I've done from primary school onwards as I explored the four major strands in the weave of my vocational life: ie writing, adult ed teaching, social work and counselling, culminating in the teaching and practice of astrology which wove all those strands together. A young woman born with Pluto in Leo was at that time generally expected by parents with Pluto in Cancer to settle down early to marriage and children. That was never going to be my path...

When Pluto entered Virgo in 1956, I began to find my way at school and to work hard to obtain sufficient qualifications to escape to university – the first in my family to do so. Pluto's Libran ingress in 1971 saw me embark on a nine-year, tempestuous love affair which was to significantly impact my life. With Pluto's entry into Scorpio in 1983, I settled into qualifying and gradually setting up practice as an astrologer, as well as into what was to prove a happy, stable and long-lasting 'till death us do part' marriage undertaken in 1982 at the very end of Pluto's transit through Libra. In 1985, as Pluto settled into his journey through Scorpio, I became self-employed, a state in which I have happily remained.

Pluto transiting my third house Jupiter in Scorpio in the early 1990s saw me catching the 7.10 am red-eye shuttle every month to fly from Glasgow to London for the day to begin studying with Dr Liz Greene and the late great Charles Harvey at the Centre for Psychological Astrology (CPA). Pluto's ingress into Sagittarius in 1995 saw me begin a three-year period of formal study which gained me the Diploma in Psychological Astrology and the nickname 'The Flying Scot'.

With Pluto into Capricorn in 2008 I ventured onto the Web with my main blog "Writing from the Twelfth House", for a time also running three others ie 'Astrology: Questions and Answers', 'Wisps from the Dazzling Darkness' (an account and analysis of 30 years' intermittent paranormal experiences), and 'Jupiter Meets Uranus' (original research into the 1997 and 2010/11 Jupiter/Uranus conjunctions) – all now archives except for "Writing from the Twelfth House".

Also significant with that shift into Capricorn in 2008 was my declaring myself fit again – after a long period of burnout from 2001-8 co-inciding with Neptune opposing all my twelfth house planets – most aptly, at the top of a mountain pass in a wild, remote part of Scotland with a fabulous view seawards...



Flying Scot

Source: Virgin Trains East Coast, CC BY 3.0
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via Wikimedia Commons (edited)

I'm hoping at this point that those of my readers strongly 'plugged-in' to the outer planets but especially Pluto, will be scanning their own lives and reflecting on whether similarly significant life shifts also occurred with them. **Do let me know!!**

Pluto's slow shift into Aquarius 3/2023-11/2024...what's been happening in YOUR world?

As I pointed out at the start of this essay, and have written about in more depth in other contexts in recent years, we are in the throes not only of a major shift between one 200+ year period and another, (as defined by the movement of the 20-year Jupiter/ Saturn cycles) but also of the slow progression of deeply transformative Pluto from Capricorn to Aquarius for the first time since the 1770s.

That was a time of major social, political and cultural revolution including (in Europe and North America) the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789, not to mention the Scientific Revolution which had segued into the European Enlightenment by then... so we can look back and have some idea of the enormity of what our world community is going through now.

Another important dimension of interest for me as an astrologer has long been that of observing how the macrocosm of larger world patterns 'trickles down' into the microcosmic patterns of our personal lives. These patterns impact most strongly on those of us who are most strongly 'plugged in' to the prevailing numbers.

Those of us who are deeply marked natally by Pluto, and/or strongly 'plugged in' to the latter degrees of Aries, Cancer, Libra and especially Capricorn, and the early degrees of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and especially Aquarius, will in particular be feeling the strain and challenge of this epochal time of major transition from an Earth to an Air era, being currently underscored by the slow shift of Pluto from earthy Capricorn to airy Aquarius:



French Revolution

Source: Eugène Delacroix, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Into Aquarius 3/23, back to Capricorn 6/23, into Aquarius 01/24, back to Capricorn 9/24, finally settling into Aquarius 11/24. It's enough to make us all dizzy, disoriented – and finding great difficulty in seeing the way ahead.

So – it is hardly surprising, in a tempestuous, difficult, uncertain period for our home planet and all its creatures including us, that some kind of firm ground to stand on, some degree of certainty, is what most people long for – and what very many of us are having great difficulty finding at present.

Three current lives

Here are vivid contemporary testimonies which illustrate with remarkable relevance the impact of Pluto's Capricorn to Aquarius shift in three very different individuals' lives. The feedback also shows how literal astrological symbolism can sometimes be...

Victor Olliver 1.9.23:

...Pluto in its to-and-fro between Capricorn and Aquarius trines my Sun in very early Gemini on and off up to the end of 2025 – so it's still early days yet to determine the impact on my life. In one distinct area there has been a curious development already.

My Sun sits in the Equal 4th house and transiting Pluto's oscillation is in my Equal 11th house (actually, much of my Aquarius sits in the 12th house, ending in the 1st). The trine started in May 2023, though out of orb by just a few minutes (I'll allow it), but strictly in orb (i.e, one degree away) from 9 February 2024. Nevertheless in May 2023 (just after Pluto's first entry into Aquarius) a new mood came over me in relation to the house I live in. It's my old family home, inherited from my late mother. Up to May I was quite determined to sell it to say goodbye to the past. I had never much liked the place, did not like the

way it looked – and it had some sad memories. Yet in May, as Pluto linked with my Sun, I changed my mind, feeling I should not sell up but instead show love to the house – in a way it would be another way of showing love to my mother's memory and honouring my father even though he was the cause of much misery.

So, I have now embarked on a major refurbishment and redecoration of the house and it is likely to take a year or two to complete. The house will reflect more my taste. Of course the 4th house is the chart zone of 'home', 'family' and emotional nature – and Pluto's slow ingress of Aquarius marks the change of element from earth to air: already people have commented that the house looks 'opened up' due to the new windows minus Venetian blinds and heavy curtains, as if fresh air has been admitted.

Perhaps that's too literal a connection with Pluto's new journey in air, but it's worth noting – astrology can be absurdly literal. In another sense, Pluto is dredging up what may have lain dormant or concealed within my heart; a wish to be reconciled with my past and to atone for my snobbish attitude to the property – really quite irrational. Pluto will root out what is false or harmful. Pluto can be the liberator if one is prepared for likely upheaval. I am sure the trine will be triggering other evolutionary changes over the next two years or so...

Anne Whitaker 8.9.23:

...2020: the Jupiter/Saturn conjunction at 0 Aquarius on the Winter Solstice of that year heralded our entry into the new 200+ year Air Era, an entry currently being underscored by Pluto's slow transition into Aquarius.

As a highly Plutonian person, it was also the year when my old life ended dramatically with my husband's being felled by a fatal stroke – on the opening day of a new Saturn/Pluto cycle at 23 Capricorn on 12.1.2020. Shortly after this, in March 2020, I went into lockdown along with almost everyone else as the covid pandemic swept the globe via an airborne virus turning our lives upside down and sending us into cyberspace communication en masse via platforms like Zoom. **The Air Era is surely now upon us...**

And – it's been Air all the way for me since then. Putting together my "Postcards to the Future: Mercurial Musings 1995-2021" collection of 60 essays, articles and columns was a major project during lockdowns which helped me recover from the initial trauma of losing Ian, my partner/soulmate of nearly 40 years. I've now established a very different life: centred round mentoring a lovely group world-wide of astrology students studying with reputable courses, supporting astrology initiatives here in Glasgow, and of course writing, my first love.

I'm currently working on producing a collection of my writings on the Moon's Nodes: research studies and essays where one can vividly see the theory of the Nodes' significance manifesting in people's lived experience both collectively and at a personal level. I'm also considering re-publishing my research studies on Jupiter/Uranus conjunctions as the next conjunction due in Spring 2024 shapes up.

A major development in this transitional period has been finding co-working space very near where I live which has provided a new community (Aquarius, anyone?!) of interesting young people, many of whom to my great pleasure are open-mindedly interested in Astrology. Happily, there are plenty of opportunities arising now for me to be a useful Elder...

Alison Finlay 18.9.23:

...2023, so far, has been an interesting year. To my utter delight and surprise, my long-term partner proposed in April, shortly after Pluto's ingress into Aquarius. I had no idea and was further taken aback to discover that he had bought the ring as Pluto was in the very last degree of Capricorn. Family and friends have been delighted for us – as are we. Certainly the proposal was unexpected and has altered our relationship.

Timing is everything: I then began to think back to our first meeting 15 years ago. Checking my ephemeris, I discovered this was also a time when Pluto was changing sign – from the last degree of Sagittarius to Capricorn! With my natal Venus placement in the final throes of Capricorn, transiting Pluto has been hovering over her since early 2022. The fifth and final exact conjunction takes place at the end of 2023. (By Placidus, natal Venus sits in the 4th house, 5th in Equal and Whole sign house systems. Venus rules the natal true North Node in Taurus in the 9th house in all three systems quoted, with the

natal North Node trine natal Venus.)

Pluto's long transit of the 4th house of home and family has brought significant changes, including my partner's move to Scotland. This change in relationship has brought extended family dynamics with all the attendant practicalities. During that time, my home has changed significantly especially via a self-built garden room which has become a work haven for me; my husband to be is fabulously gifted when it comes to home alterations. Pluto's journey through Capricorn, started some 15 years ago, now aspecting my natal Venus, demonstrates the value of my commitment to my partner during our relationship during this time.

With no rush or date in mind there's now a wedding to plan. (Pluto in Aquarius is not due to reach my 5th house until February 2025.) We are quietly confident that marriage will be a new beginning for us both with new possibilities for growth and transformation. Family and friends are hoping to hear soon what our plans are; with Pluto settled into Aquarius by February 2025, however, the ceremony is not likely to be conventional or traditional despite that natal Venus in Capricorn!

I was also delighted that the culmination of some eight years of studying with the Faculty of Astrological Studies resulted in my finally gaining the Diploma in June 2023: I'll receive it formally on Faculty Day on 23 March 2024. With Pluto's final ingress into Aquarius by the end of 2024, I wonder what this new phase will bring for me and my role as an astrologer?...

We have been here before...

As W. B. Yeats so presciently observed in his famous poem "The Second Coming" (written in 1919, just after the First World War):

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...(ii)*

It's really worth [reading that poem](#), or reading it again, for a reminder that the world has gone through periods where chaos dominates over order since the dawn of all human civilisations. **We are once again at that point.** However – it is time to remind ourselves, in the clear words of astrologer Evan Nathaniel Grim, the founder and lead analyst of Inner Worlds Astrology, in a recent very useful [Independent article](#) on the Aquarian Pluto Return, USA's in particular, that

Pluto represents in astrology the destruction of old foundations so that you can replace those foundations with new ones...

As Grim so usefully points out here, crisis also brings opportunity, as the Chinese ideogram (**Wei Ji** 危机) tells us. What we don't hear so much about Pluto transits/transitions is how they can absolutely energise, transform us as individuals – and communities. We can certainly see this rich mixture in the three examples just offered.

Conclusion

Although experiencing feelings of uncertainty and sometimes turbulence with most of the people I know in varied contexts worldwide, as the new Air Era gradually takes shape, I can also feel my life changing with it in potentially creative ways. Our current world situation is fraught with danger, darkness and difficulty; it would be naive and dishonest to try to pretend otherwise.



W.B. Yeats

Source: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

However, I am immensely grateful to have the Big Picture, long-term historical perspective provided by astrological symbolism. Knowing we are collectively at present in the chaotic energy field between one world Era and another helps me – and hopefully other students/practitioners of astrology – to keep a steadier footing than might otherwise be the case.

As ever, I come back to my favourite mantra for dealing with times of turbulence, and times of personal pain:

Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can, work with the willing – and just get on with it.

Bon voyage, everyone!