

## *What the May 1968 Full Moon Portends by Dane Rudhyar*

**On April 19, 1968, Jupiter, which was stationary** in the zodiac and about to end its retrograde period at 25°50' Leo, made a square with Neptune retrograde in Scorpio. Such a square had occurred for the first time September 6, 1967 with Neptune then at 21°54' Scorpio, both planets being direct.

On April 20, 1968 Neptune formed a highly constructive sextile aspect with Uranus (then also retrograde) at 25°50' Virgo. This aspect was a repeat of the sextiles which occurred in September, 1966, and on July 23, 1967, relating the 21st and 22nd degrees of Virgo and Scorpio. Thus, Neptune for many months has been involved in an ambiguous situation — i.e. in harmonious relationship to Uranus and in discordant, even though dynamic, relationship to Jupiter.

In August, 1967. the Sun and Mercury in Leo and Mars in Scorpio added their vitalizing influences to the square of Jupiter to Neptune. This year, before and after the climactic Full Moon of May 12, Mars and Neptune, then the Sun and later Venus in the sign Taurus form oppositions to Neptune in Scorpio and squares to Jupiter in Leo. At the same time, however, they form sextile aspects to Pluto and Uranus in late Virgo. In other words, throughout the month of May, two basic aspects — the square of Jupiter to Neptune and the sextile of Uranus to Neptune — are being highlighted in a play of light and shadow by all the smaller planets (Mercury, Mars, and Venus) and by the two Lights (Sun and Moon). In mid-May, the Full Moon (see [the chart](#)) linking 21°51' Taurus and 21°51' Scorpio can be said to bring to a focus this entire planetary situation — truly an ambiguous or ambivalent one, as it involves a powerful T-square in fixed signs and a highly significant sextile to the two planets Uranus and Pluto, the recent conjunction of which could be considered still effective. How can this situation be interpreted?

### **The Full Moon of May**

The first thing we must do is consider individually the three basic factors in the situation. The Full Moon of May has quite a reputation, as it is related, symbolically at least, to the birth, illumination, and death of Gautama, the Buddha — which are said to have occurred on the Taurus Full Moon. It is, for this reason, sacred to all those who follow the way of life or revere the memory of the Buddha; and this century, many a group of students of "esotericism" have held and hold the belief that this Full Moon constitutes a high point of the year during which an outpouring of spiritual forces is said to occur because of a planetwide re-energizing of the Buddha's power and consciousness.

If this be the case, we can expect that such an outpouring of spiritual forces — whatever it may exactly mean, "occultly" speaking — will be particularly significant and powerful this year, as it will occur just as Uranus and Neptune, symbols of transcendent and transforming activity, form a power-releasing and constructive sextile. Behind Uranus, we should add, stands Pluto, which is assuredly involved in the over-all situation. So it could be said that this mid-May period should see the constructive release of whatever forces, inspiration, or compulsion for change was represented by the conjunction of Uranus and Pluto in 1965-66.

Easter, on the other hand (April 14) — which is the most essential focal point of the Christian tradition, more so than Christmas, as the Greek Orthodox Church has always clearly understood — occurs at the time of a lunar eclipse. It occurs also at the time of the square of Jupiter and Neptune, as Jupiter is practically stationary for a whole week. This may be at least a symbolical indication of the deep crisis affecting Christianity, including the for so long immovable Roman Catholic Church. Jupiter clearly represents the power of all organized churches and indeed of all tradition-based social and political institutions.

As Jupiter reaches the square to Neptune, these socio-religious institutions are hit "squarely" by the great Neptunian wave on one hand of ecumenism and church mergers and on the other hand of almost fashionable (yet also deeply psychological) interest in "mystical" experiences or in what passes for them — whether these be sought in the pursuit of Oriental techniques of meditation and yoga or through the use of psychedelic ("consciousness-expanding") drugs.

Uranus, in contrast to Jupiter (and even more, of course, to Saturn, Jupiter's inevitable partner in all forms of social, cultural, or religious organizations), represents the power of constant change, transformation, or mutation. When held in check for a long time by "the Establishment" — i.e., by the official power of traditional institutions and entrenched prejudices and privileges — Uranian energies reach an explosive state and bring about revolutionary upheavals. However, when working in harmony, Uranus and Neptune concur in building up a strong current of collective human desires and emotions which tend to overcome the inertia of the Jupiter-Saturn-based social institutions or everyday behavior. If Pluto is backing up Uranus — as it has been doing of late, this current takes the aspect of a flood and, in some cases, of a tidal wave. It is this type of thing which astrological conditions in April and May strongly suggest.

## The Uranus-Neptune Cycle

Conjunctions of Uranus and Neptune occur about every 171.3 years. Their recurrence establishes what is called the Uranus-Neptune cycle; and if one wishes to understand any of the important aspects between these two planets, one has to consider such aspects as characteristic **phases** in the development of the cyclic relationship between the two planets. Likewise, the New Moon, First Quarter, Full Moon, Last Quarter should be regarded not merely as "aspects" between the Sun and Moon — as conjunctions, squares, oppositions —

but more as definite phases of a cyclic process which begins at New Moon (conjunction) and reaches its apex at the Full Moon (opposition). In such a cyclic process, two basically different "hemi-cycles" should be differentiated — i.e., from the conjunction to the opposition (the waxing part of the lunation cycle) and from the opposition to the next conjunction (the waning half of the cycle).

Uranus and Neptune were conjunct for the last time in March, 1821, at 2°59' Capricorn. They will be conjunct again during the 1992-1993 period. They were in opposition more or less exactly during a period extending from 1906 to 1912 — the period just preceding World War I, which marked as it were the apex of the European culture, but also which contained the germs of what has been occurring ever since. The year 1912 marks the beginning of the Turkish and Balkan Wars, which led not only to the two World Wars, but as well to the present tense situation in the regions once parts of the Turkish Empire.

In 1906, Japan's triumph over Russia began the era of the rise of Asia — and indeed of all non-white people against European hegemony and colonialism. In Russia, social conditions were developing which prophesied the Communist Revolution of 1917. Then, too, Einstein's Theory of Relativity had already evoked inconspicuously the 1945 atomic bombs. Automobiles were being manufactured in larger quantities; airplanes were beginning to rise above the soil. Humanity was beginning to become aware of the full implications of the Industrial Revolution, which had begun to spread over the Western world around the time of the 1821 conjunction.

The period from the conjunction to the opposition phases in a cycle of relationship between two planets (including the Sun and Moon) is fundamentally a period of more or less instinctive or compulsive activity. New conditions and new needs have started the new process going; but man is rarely aware of the full meaning of what is going on. He feels that the old structures are collapsing, and he senses how tragic that process might be; but he is not conscious of what the "New Order" his activities are building (whether he likes the results or not) will actually be. Consciousness develops only later, when the two planets form a trine aspect on the way to their opposition (this is the period 1880-1883 in the Uranus-Neptune cycle); and it reaches a peak of formulation around and after this opposition.

The square of Uranus and Neptune occurred between 1867 and 1870; it marked the rise of Germany and the defeat of France. This is what I call a "waxing square" because it is similar to the First Quarter, during the waxing period of the lunation cycle. The "waning square" occurred during the period 1953-1955, just as Saturn was conjunct Neptune — thus adding to the confusion. This was the era of the Eisenhower-Dulles Administration and of the practice of international "brinkmanship." It marked Stalin's death and the rise of a relatively new Soviet Russia, the defeat of the French army in Tonkin which led to our present involvement in Vietnam, the beginning of Algeria's revolt against France, and the mounting tension between Egypt and Israel. All of these events started a chain of events

leading to the present world situation and to the sextile of Uranus and Neptune which we are discussing.

Theoretically, this aspect should be considered a harmonious and constructive one; but what is constructiveness in terms of Uranus and Neptune? Evidently not the type of events which would bolster up the status quo and give lovely dreams to the leaders of "the Establishment." What is expectable are situations which favor the emergence of new ideals as a result of an ever-clearer realization of the failures of the then nearly ending 171-year cycle. These failures have produced acute needs; and these "cry out" for solution. Constructiveness then refers to man's ability to imagine these solutions.

Nothing guarantees, of course, that these solutions will prove valid, adequate, and applicable. In the preceding Uranus-Neptune cycle 171 years ago — early in 1796-1797, when these two planets formed a sextile linking, as today, Virgo and Scorpio — the solutions presented, whether in a post-revolutionary France soon to be dominated by Napoleon or in the United States after Washington's presidential term (the Alien and Sedition Laws, for instance), were not of lasting value. But what had to be solved were conditions having had their source around 1650 — that is, in the England of the Cromwell period and in the France of the great Classical Age of rationalism which produced not only Louis XIV and Versailles, but with Descartes (and in England, Newton) the definite beginnings of our modern scientific age. The last years of the 18th century indeed already announced the Industrial Revolution (in England especially) and began the Romantic Movement which flourished after the 1821 Uranus-Neptune conjunction.

Now we are, in one sense, reacting against and trying to overcome the results of 150 years dominated by the ambiguous blessings of the Industrial Revolution. We are faced with myriad problems arising from these fifteen decades of intense social, economic, political, religious upheavals and from the uprooting of masses of men after massive wars, revolutions, and industrialization — and of late automation. But we are also — the best minds among us — intent upon establishing somehow new foundations for a "New Age." A new science seeks to pierce the mysteries of the almost immediate future, extrapolating from present facts the outlines of tomorrow. It is called "prospective."

Twenty-four years separate us from the next conjunction of Uranus and Neptune — which means two 12-year cycles of Jupiter.

## The Jupiter-Neptune Cycle

These two planets form conjunctions every 13 years. Their cycle seems to have to do, generally speaking, with the possibility of extending the field of the **social consciousness** (the feeling of human togetherness, of fellowship, of good will, etc.). Jupiter represents basically such a social consciousness and all that derives from it — social prestige, social management, religious and political institutions, wealth born of cooperation and organization. But all these social processes, when expressed by Jupiter, are operating within

relatively narrow limits — i.e., Saturnian limits. Neptune, on the other hand, refers to the yearning for vast horizons, for universality, for the most inclusive forms of organization.

It is significant that the League of Nations, envisioned by President Wilson, began under the 1918-1919 conjunction of Jupiter and Neptune. Thirteen years later, a new conjunction saw the effectiveness of the League practically nullified and the rise of Japan (invading China) and of Nazi Germany. That was also the beginning of the New Deal and of our involvement in a new struggle for world domination.

The next conjunction of Jupiter and Neptune in the fall of 1945 witnessed the worldwide spread of American power and economic influence. The Atomic Age had begun when Neptune entered Libra; and the first nuclear chain reaction was obtained in Chicago (December, 1942) under an expansive trine aspect of Uranus and Neptune and at the start of the very long sextile of Neptune and Pluto.

We are living now through the "waning" square of the Jupiter-Neptune cycle which began in 1958 (September 24). While the first Sputnik was launched a year before, it was in 1958 that the "conquest of space" began in real earnest. This conjunction placed **General de Gaulle** in full power in France and began the disengagement of France from Algeria — an important factor in the Arab situation today. It marked also the rise of Castro to power in Cuba, which in turn led to the confrontation of Kennedy and Khrushchev and the withdrawal of Russian missiles from Cuba at the time of an opposition of Uranus to Jupiter. The opposition of Jupiter to Neptune occurred from June, 1964, to February, 1965, as a prelude to the October, 1965, conjunction of Uranus and Pluto and forming constructive aspects to the latter. These constructive aspects (sextiles and trines) were, of course, by-products of the most basic planetary aspect of our period — the long sextile of Neptune to Pluto already mentioned.

### The May 1968 Situation

However, it is only since September, 1966, that Uranus has reached its "waning" sextile with Neptune. This occurred a month after Jupiter found itself in "waning" trine to Neptune, and this ought to have been theoretically a highly constructive period. But it occurred after the last of the three conjunctions of Uranus to Pluto on June 30, 1966. The meaning of this general situation is, therefore, in my opinion, that of establishing a very basic framework for the working out of what this Uranus-Pluto conjunction portends. It promises a constructive, inspiring, and regenerating working out; but, I repeat, the term "constructive" when used with reference to the three remote and essentially challenging and revolutionary planets Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto is **not** to be understood as the bolstering and stabilizing of any tradition-based status quo; indeed, it implies just the opposite.

The present exact sextile of Uranus and Neptune is still backed by Pluto, which moves only some five degrees behind Uranus in Virgo. But what is happening early this May of 1968 is that Mars, having reached the last decanate of Taurus at the same time as Mercury, is forming a T-square, including the very recent (April 19) square of Jupiter to Neptune.

Later, the Sun, then Venus reach the same region of Taurus (that of the Pleiades). Thus, there is a massive stimulation of this Jupiter-Neptune square. Yet the sextile of Uranus and Neptune, exact for the last time on Full Moon day, is also stimulated by all the smaller planets and the Lights.

The loser, if one can use such a term, is evidently Jupiter; and as on May 16, Mars forms a semisquare to Saturn, duplicating the same aspect made by Mercury on May 9 and announcing the Sun's semisquare to Saturn on New Moon day (May 27), Saturn is obviously involved in the "attack." "The Establishment" is being challenged; some aspects of the status quo could break down under the pressure of a very emotional and inflationary situation.

Which aspect is likely to be most affected cannot be ascertained with complete assurance. One thinks of the religious situation and of a further mobilization of the liberal and universalizing forces in the ecumenical movement. One suspects also the financial situation at a time when the dollar is still under attack and real inflation is menacing. Speculative trends may be increasing in intensity. When Mars met Neptune late last August, 1967, it had also just squared Jupiter at 19° Leo, together with Mercury — and the Sun had been on that degree a few days before. Thus, some of the pressures exerted then were slightly similar to those expectable this May.

One recalls, of course, the Negro riots in many parts of the country and the ever-deeper involvement in the Vietnam War. When the T-square configuration is formed this May, the situation could be even more sharply focalized — but so also will the "constructive" power of the trans-Saturnian planets. The point of release for the energies of the T-cross around the Wesak Full Moon is the sign Aquarius — and there stands, among other things, the Moon of the U.S.A. birth-chart. This could mean a wave of mass emotion and perhaps of speculation; but it could also mark some spectacular achievement of science, perhaps in terms of space exploration and/or bio-chemistry. What remains of moral controls in our highly permissive American society could collapse; and this could be the result of some large-scale scandal.

Quite a few of the world's political leaders have the fixed signs of the zodiac emphasized in their birth-charts by squares and oppositions. The most often used chart for the birth of Soviet Russia — 50 years ago — is also featuring a T-cross, with Neptune, Saturn, and the Moon in Leo (probably on either side of the ascendant) opposing Uranus and squared by a Sun-Taurus conjunction in mid-Scorpio; but Russia's present leaders, Kосygin and Brezhnev, do not seem too strongly affected by the May situation.

Very likely what is at stake is much more basic than the fate of some political leaders; and I feel that the United States will be one of the most affected countries, for better or for worse. In the Sagittarius-rising chart of the **Declaration of Independence**, which I consider (to me, beyond any doubt) the most valid symbol of the American people — the U.S. Government as such is another thing, as it did not exist before 1789 — I find that about 2°15' of Libra is at the midheaven. Neptune was reaching that degree when the

atom-bomb project was begun, and the chart's progressed Mars was also there when F. D. Roosevelt died and the first atom bomb exploded. Besides, the arc between this midheaven and the tenth-house Saturn, so characteristic of our paternalistic and legalistic political system (the "Great Father" in the White House and the supreme Constitution), measures to the exact distance in years between the Declaration of Independence and the first session of the U.S. Congress or Washington's Inauguration — highly significant fact at all levels.

At the time of the coming Presidential Elections, Uranus is crossing this U.S. midheaven; a month later, Jupiter repeats this transit. We can expect rather unusual events — possibly a contested election or one thrown into the Congress' lap. The conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 1980 — also an Election year — will take place on this U.S. midheaven; and before that, Pluto will have moved back and forth over the same degree of Libra in 1971-72-73; and 1972 is another Election year.

I personally feel that very basic changes are occurring and will occur in our nation before the great period which will see major planetary conjunctions in Capricorn (from 1988 to 1992) and end with the next conjunction of Uranus and Neptune already discussed. I feel, moreover, that 1968 may well mark the beginnings of the period of preparation for this vast global crisis of reorganization which I see as the prelude to a new type of human society, an "Aquarian Age" humanity which should rise in the middle period of the twenty-first century.

This does not at all necessarily mean that startling events will take place during this month of May, 1968; yet I believe on the face of various types of evidence that this Full Moon of May is likely to see forming a "**knot of destiny**" which will gradually bring about very basic social, economic, cultural, and political changes. It is entirely possible that we will witness late this year an even stronger rise to world importance of the so-called non-developed countries — mainly, the old colonial empires, now an inchoate group of struggling nations (the "Third World") which the United States has managed so well both generously to assist and deeply to antagonize.

It is my belief that whatever will happen during this crucial turning point in American history — and, as a result, in world history — will be traceable to the period of the Full Moon of May. What can we do about it? Try to understand what is happening and the issues at stake — and "watch and pray."