

## January Stars



For this month we will focus on two primary activities in the heavens. Perhaps the most intensely dynamic activity is the relationship of Mars with Sun, but especially Mars with Pluto, which spans from early November, 2024 until late April 2025, after Easter. Secondly, Venus meets Saturn on January 18<sup>th</sup> in Aquarius and then comes into conjunction with Neptune on February 2<sup>nd</sup> in the ascending Moon Node in the stars of Pisces. These two dynamics present a kind of cosmic polarity of challenges or questions from the planetary intelligences.

First, we shall look into the Mars/Pluto dynamic which spans well beyond this month. In autumn of 2024 Pluto had been in retrograde going back to the transition point between Sagittarius and Capricorn, before going direct on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Pluto will journey through Capricorn, setting in motion this Pluto/Capricorn dynamic for humanity lasting until 2042! Mars was in Gemini fixed stars, stepping into Cancer at the start of November and coming into the first of three oppositions to Pluto first on November 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Cancer/Capricorn axis (just before the USA Presidential election), just one degree from the location of the Great Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in December, 2020. Thus, you could say it “remembered” the impulse of the Great Conjunction, which called for a new annunciation in humanity. But what kind of annunciation do we see? Then on December 6<sup>th</sup> Mars turned retrograde, starting its looping movement which brought it nearest to the Earth on January 12<sup>th</sup>. On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mars again came into opposition with Pluto in the Cancer/Capricorn axis. Mars will complete its retrograde loop, going direct on February 24<sup>th</sup>. It will then return to an opposition with Pluto on April 27<sup>th</sup> again in the Cancer/Capricorn axis.

This retrograde loop and opposition of Mars to Pluto is a rare event. Usually, an opposition of these two planets lasts for a few days. However, this triple opposition due to the retrograde movement will span about 6 months! A triple opposition between these two planets last occurred in 2007/2008 during the great financial crisis and in 1939, the start of World War II, when Poland was invaded by Germany and Britain and France declared war. Both were times of great challenges and upheaval. The deeper meaning of the financial crisis and the destruction of World War II can only be found in an esoteric understanding of the hidden activity of certain secret entities working to achieve their goals in humanity. The planetary activity of Neptune which will be described later is also a factor in this. So, we can see historical examples of the upheaval and disruption of this kind of configuration. The opposition in Cancer/Capricorn points to a highly volatile, even destructive challenge for humanity, asking us to cope with the history of materialism and separation from the divine world carried by Cancer and the cathartic initiation process carried by Capricorn. But one other picture of the stars of Cancer can offer a redemptive imagination. In the middle of the constellation, which one could say stands in the “gap” of the two vortex gestures of the constellation symbol, is the cluster of stars named the Beehive or Praesepe, which means the Manger. In Italy of course the Presepe is the name for the Nativity scenes displayed at Christmas. So, we find on deeper examination that these stars of Cancer carry the potential healing of the “gap” through the event inaugurated in the Manger. As for Capricorn, based on the research of Willi Sucher, the deeper meaning within the constellation of Capricorn comes from the period given by Rudolf Steiner as Ancient Moon evolution, the fifth round, as described by Willi Sucher:

*Now, during the fifth or Goat cycle, they (the Sun beings) were confronted with the necessity of retrieving the deviation that had been imposed onto their own gift, the human astral body. It was, therefore, a cycle of great cosmic catharsis, of great spiritual battles between the Sun hierarchies and the beings who had led the Moon body into an extreme densification. This planet was split into pieces, whereby its density was reduced. In our present universe, the so-called planetoids—tiny planetary bodies between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter—are a kind of cosmic memory of those happenings on Ancient Moon. (Willi Sucher, Isis Sophia II)*

Pluto in Capricorn, with its powerful deep will forces of both potential transformation down even to the physical level, as well as great destruction, even revolution, remains opposite this Mars loop in Cancer, the constellation of materialism and embodiment in matter and the “broken bridge” to the divine, for several months. This presents great challenges to humanity to come to terms on a deep level with the consequences of materialism and the egotism and separation developed through it. Oppositions are perhaps the most challenging of planetary aspects. Pluto challenges humanity to address the deepest sub-conscious will forces through a catharsis, hopefully leading humanity to a new breakthrough to spiritual reunion through the dissolution of the past forms. The general theme of power and anger come into this configuration, with the potential for constructive or destructive effects, depending on how humanity meets them. This potential for humanity initiation is not guaranteed but up to us. For the USA, which also impacts the global community, great change is already taking place during this opposition time with the new presidency of Donald Trump. One can just look at the many

executive orders enacted on his first day as an indication of the direction of his will. Where will this take humanity? Perhaps a quote from a news headline can give us an indication: *Trump the wrecking ball brings chaos to order*. Yet one can also ask whether this is also part of a necessary process to bring humanity through the catharsis to the needed awakening.

We can add to this unique opposition the opposition of the Sun with Mars on January 15<sup>th</sup> and the Sun's conjunction with Pluto on Inauguration Day, January 20<sup>th</sup>. Here we have not Mars but the Sun, the representative of the cosmic I AM, the spiritual ego. Here we have not the Mars ego of "Earthly Self" but rather the potentially higher sense of the "I", the solar I AM nature shining into this configuration. Will the Mars/Pluto darker elements overwhelm this Sun or can we perhaps see in it the potential of the victory of the higher "I", the solar nature over the dark unconscious forces of destruction and aggression. We are certain to experience the polarities between these impulses in stark and even intensely challenging ways.

Then in early February, Venus will meet Neptune in the ascending Moon node. Neptune is already within the orb of the lunar node, just 3 degrees away and this will bring important challenges in itself. Here again we have an opportunity for a great healing encounter with the sphere of Neptune, intensified by being in the lunar node, an open gateway between the Earth sphere and the planetary activity in this node. Neptune in the lunar node will bring an encounter with this sphere, another outer planetary sphere, which can again be both an opportunity for great awakening, even a transformative revolution or a powerful activity of the Ahrimanic work in the Earthly realm. Venus meeting Neptune here can become a conscious tool for us to bring the power of the Christic I AM forces into this activity of Ahriman. However, Neptune will remain in the lunar node, after its encounter with Venus, into May of 2025. Saturn will enter the Moon node orb already in March and will be in orb of a conjunction with Neptune, which will be exact in August, 2025. All of these events take place in the stars of Pisces, the constellation of brotherhood and ultimately of human love for one another, the task of our Piscean Age. Rudolf Steiner once described the Piscean Age as the time when humanity will learn to stand on its own two feet. This meeting of Saturn and Neptune in the ascending node and their conjunction can become a major opportunity in world karma in relation to the Ahrimanic realm. We will explore this in later articles.

Now we can look at the conjunction of Venus with Saturn in Aquarius stars on January 18<sup>th</sup>. We have in Saturn the great sphere of world karma and cosmic memory, the sphere which carries the macro vision of the Divine Plan for humanity, now meeting Venus, the sphere of the new Christian mysteries (from the perspective of astrosophy). Here can see a great gesture of healing and redemption in which Venus communes with Saturn in the stars which carry the future of the 6<sup>th</sup> Aquarian Age in which Spirit Self, the transformed astral nature, will become a force for good in evolution. Saturn in Aquarius is holding this imagination of our future ideals in its grand plan for human evolution, yet at the same time calling us to face the challenges of our karmic debts to the world from our past deeds. Venus meeting Saturn can be a real opportunity for us to bring the higher Self perspective of healing and reintegration with the divine plan into our world karma.

So, January, and the months to come, provide us with a grand starry imagination of the cosmic intelligences during these times. It gives us the picture of the great and powerful challenges of transformation and revolutionary change to overcome the past, the egotism of our times, the deep forces of the will and the opportunity to bring healing to our world karma in preparation for the coming Age. In some ways, if we look deeply into the contrasts between the Mars/Pluto challenge, we can perhaps even go so far as to say we face the great challenge of the “I” and the “anti-I”. Pluto is connected even to the emerging Asuric and Soratic activity, that third force of evil described by Rudolf Steiner, which seeks to even destroy the ego and establish the “Anti-I”. But we can also look to the potentials of this asuric activity. How? When the illusion of ego is destroyed, when humans experience the chaos of confusion, we are left with the “empty space” at the center of our being. We can remember that Pluto’s discovery is connected to the rise of philosophical existentialism as well as the emergence of Nazism in Germany. Yet that time was also when, as Rudolf Steiner indicated, humans would become aware of the New Christ experience, sometimes referred to as the Etheric Christ experience. If we are able to bring the true I into our being, the necessary emptiness can be filled with a new power of the spirit human. Without the new I AM, then the emptiness can lead to a feeling of annihilation, despair and a readiness to accept a world ruler who will save us from the terror of the emptiness. So, in one way we can see that the destructive work of the asuras may not just lead to annihilation but can become transformative if we can but rise to the challenge, leading us to a new sense of “I” born out of spiritual renewal within, like the image of the Phoenix, reborn out of the fire of destruction. In the world, great destruction and devastation can lead to rebirth, IF human beings can see in this a path to the Way, the Truth and the Life.

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