

## Venus and Pluto and the Encounter with Evil

Every year during these Holy Nights of Christmas, between the birth of the pure Child and the High King child, I try to engage with the starry language of these nights. Often a particular gesture during the Holy Nights is a continuation or a punctuation point of a longer gesture of a planet during the year. For example, last year we had on Solstice the Great Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, which I have written about. This was a highly significant planetary event inaugurating a generational theme, especially given the relationship of Jupiter and Saturn to Pluto in the months leading up to the conjunction. All of 2020 was integral to the culminating Great Conjunction at solstice. These events all occurred in the stars of the Archer (Sagittarius) that have initiated a true challenge and call to humanity around the very nature of the ego, the self, the "I", -- challenging humanity to come to terms with where we are and are not in our proper evolutionary goals towards spiritual growth. The Great Conjunction happened just entering the stars of Capricorn, where it will repeat (this particular generation of Great Conjunctions) every 60 years in Capricorn until Easter 2199. It will take place just at the transition into Aquarius from Capricorn marking the inauguration of a quite different stream of cosmic influence in this generation of Great Conjunctions, a new era. One can see in this the span of time in which the evolutionary impulses unfold, particularly with these outer planets.

During the Holy Nights and for months to come, Saturn continues in the stars of Capricorn, the stars of crisis/catharsis/breakthrough/initiation, where it will continue until February, 2023. Jupiter, moving faster, also continues in Capricorn but steps into Aquarius this May, 2022. So, Jupiter also continues through this constellation of crisis/catharsis/initiation until it crosses into Aquarius in May. Perhaps this move of Jupiter into Aquarius will inspire us towards the implementation of new ideals that pave the way and lay a foundation for the future 6<sup>th</sup> Cultural Age of Aquarius. Perhaps we can realize some new social and cultural forms that can help work towards a new wisdom of the human being out of the forward-looking sphere of Jupiter. Looking at these two planets moving forward in the short term, one can say that the zodiacal impulse from Capricorn, which remembers the Great War in Heaven and calls for a breakthrough through catharsis for humanity, continues for the next 2-3 years in connection to this theme of the Great Conjunction, which as I have written about previously, carries the memory and the continued challenge of the annunciation/birth or Christmas event of a new impulse in world destiny.

However, this year my attention has been drawn particularly to the activity of Venus during these Holy Nights, specifically the movement of Venus in relation to Mercury and Pluto. Over these days and following weeks it encounters Pluto three times as it goes through a loop formation, going retrograde, and then coming between Sun and Earth in conjunction with the Sun on January 8th, all in the stars of Archer. In 2020 the stars of the Archer were central to many of the stellar events related to the critical world events that took place in relation to the great question of egoity, "what is the human being!?", what is our "I"? Now in 2021, it seems significant to me that Venus especially has this activity in Archer over the Holy Nights and into 2022. It is joined by Mercury, with both of them meeting each other as well as Pluto from Dec 25<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>. So, we have this kind of dance of Mercury and Venus with Pluto all in the Archer over this time. How can we approach this?

When we consider these so-called "inner" or "inferior" planets, Mercury and Venus, we are looking into the future. From one perspective, you can say that Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, carry more the past stages of our evolution as we descended into matter, into object, ego-earth existence and to the independent ego. In fact, Earth evolution is divided into two parts, with the Mars half as our descent into independence and full object consciousness and the Mercury half as our re-ascent into the future stages of transformation and the becoming of our higher spiritual calling. This is particularly in relation to the unfolding of the ego, the I AM, in transforming our being, which is our conscious task since the

consciousness soul age. Rudolf Steiner describes that during the early stages of Earth evolution, the Sun, Earth and Moon were one “body” but due to the increasing densification taking place, the Sun beings could no longer tolerate these conditions and separated out from the Earth sphere. Mercury and Venus were part of the Sun sphere during this separation. It was later, as the Sun beings further developed, that Mercury and Venus were separated out from the Sun. So, indeed, the spheres of Mercury and Venus are more akin to the Sun beings, the Elohim, and are helpers to human beings in our evolutionary goals of spiritualization, of moving towards our “Sun-hood”.

To touch briefly on their nature, we can see in Mercury an activity that is related to the work of Michael and the transformation of intelligence. Whereas in Venus, we can see the potential of the transformative power of love in its highest forms. These planetary spheres of course have their shadow nature or obstacle nature, as do all the spheres, which we can find in the area of fallen intelligence (i.e., intellectuality in abstraction) and the fallen feeling realm (i.e., the pulling down of the force of selfless higher love into the sensual and egoistic self-love).

So, how can we understand this Venus loop during the Holy Nights, particularly in relation to the stars of the Archer and the planet Pluto? The Sun entered into the stars of the Archer on December 18<sup>th</sup>, just prior to solstice and on the same day Venus turned retrograde, meaning it began its path of moving between the Sun and Earth, so it appears in the sky to turn around and move backwards. If you have been observing the night sky after sunset in the past weeks, you have been able to observe this string of the planets after sunset, with Venus, then Saturn and then Jupiter in the western night sky. Venus was particularly bright earlier in December, but now it has turned back towards the Sun and will soon disappear into the Sun’s light. A retrograde movement means that the planet is making a gesture of leaning in or coming close to the Earth from formerly being beyond the Sun. It is wanting us to hear its message especially. On Christmas Day, Venus conjuncts Pluto. [Saturn was in square to Uranus also on Christmas Day]. On Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> Mercury conjuncts Venus, and on Dec 30<sup>th</sup> Mercury conjuncts Pluto. So, one can say that over these 5 days Venus, Mercury and Pluto are clustered. This is a conversation that is leading to the exact conjunction of the Sun and Venus culminating on January 8<sup>th</sup>. In a general sense then, these Sun-like planetary spheres are offering a choice to us in the Archer. Shall we heed their offering? They stand as representatives of the spiritualization of intelligence and the transformation of the heart forces in the face of the currently active forces of destruction out of the Pluto sphere, which we have been experiencing since 2020. They do not interfere, but await our conscious participation out of our higher awareness. But we can take this even into more specificity.

For this we focus on the loop of Venus leading to its conjunction with the Sun on January 8<sup>th</sup>. It will lead us into an encounter with the stream of the Master Mani and our relation to evil in our time. This is a vast and complex topic, so in this article, at best, we only skim the surface. However, it is deeply important as we seek spiritual answers to the confusion and fear that currently engulf the world. As is elaborated in my online video course on The Planets (see: <https://www.astrosophy.com/>), Venus, in its rhythms with the Sun, creates a five-pointed star or pentagram in the heavens over time. These conjunctions forming the five-pointed star alternate over a four and an eight-year period to form, not one, but two pentagrams, with the five points of each in the same locations, but alternating between superior and inferior conjunctions. In his research in bringing star wisdom into relation to the archetypal activity of the Christ during the Three Years, Willi Sucher connected these five points to the five signs of Christ presented in the gospels. Since the Venus Star remains intact and rotates as a whole star over time, they can be followed back in history to the time of Christ. The conjunction of this January 8<sup>th</sup>, can be traced back to two events: the beheading of John the Baptist and the Raising of the Youth of Nain. From my own perspective given the current position in the Archer and other

considerations, I see this conjunction as particularly associated with the Raising of the Youth of Nain. What does this mean for our time? This brings us to the relation to Mani.

In the Gospel, the story tells of Christ coming to the city of Nain and a funeral procession comes out of the city, bearing the body of a youth, who was *the son of a widow*. Christ raises the youth from the dead. The key words here, which Rudolf Steiner points out, are “son of a widow”. This is a direct reference to the Isis Mysteries of Egypt. Steiner states that this youth was the reincarnation of the youth of Sais, who dared to lift the veil of Isis before he was matured for initiation, and was struck dead. *In Sais, the statue of Athena, who is also believed to be Isis, had the following inscription ‘I am the All, the Past, Present and Future, my veil no mortal has yet lifted.’* (Plutarch on this story of the youth)

*The youth of Nain in the Gospel of Luke is no other than the youth of Sais; the difference between the spiritual environment of the third and the fourth cultural age is concealed even in the names. The young man of Sais wanted to know the secrets of the spiritual world unprepared; like the other initiates, he wanted to become a "son of the widow", of Isis, who mourned for her lost husband Osiris. But because he was unprepared, because he wanted to unveil the image of Isis and see the heavenly secrets on the physical plane, he fell to his death. No mortal could lift the veil of Isis at that time. The young man of Sais symbolizes the impotent wisdom of Egyptian times.*

Steiner, GA 104

Rudolf Steiner speaks about the raising of this Youth as a special initiation that would be realized in the next incarnation. He goes on to describe the deeper meaning of this funeral: how Christ felt sorry for the mother, as the representative of Isis, and the crowd attending his funeral representing initiates of the Isis mysteries of Egypt. Isis has descended to the Earth and now the son, newly initiated by Christ, must unite with his Mother and bring to life the new Christ mysteries as the transformed and resurrected Isis mysteries on Earth. This brings to mind the verse by Steiner (from *The Search for the New Isis, The Divine Sophia*): *Isis Sophia, Lucifer has slain you, and on the wings of worldwide forces, carried you off into widths of space.* Here we have the picture of Isis, the cosmic wisdom, slain into the world of space and matter. Yet the verse continues, *Christ-will working in the human being shall free you from the bonds of Lucifer and on the sails of spirit cognition in human souls, waken you to new life.* And here the redemption of Isis out of the new Christ mysteries on Earth.

Rudolf Steiner tells the further destiny of this Youth of Nain, formerly the Youth of Sais, which becomes a profound and important continuing story for humanity. In his next incarnation the Youth would bring to fruition this initiation which was done by Christ, as the great Initiate Mani, (216-277 AD). His incarnations then continue as Parsifal, the “fool” youth who must learn in a wandering life path and all that he encounters, the way to the Grail. Steiner continues to reveal the lofty stature of Mani, as he who initiated Christian Rosenkreuz into an understanding of the nature of evil. He goes on to say that Christian esotericism is derived from Manichaeism. He then indicates a possible incarnation of Mani in the 21<sup>st</sup> century if a proper body will be possible for him in those materialistic times. Much can be further said about the Mani impulse and its evolution which would expand this article considerably. However, let us focus on this Mani impulse in relation to this Venus conjunction in Archer and meeting Pluto.

Steiner speaks of Mani as carrying a Christian impulse which will be realized only in the future, as it is deeply connected with the redemption of evil. In fact, in one lecture he states, “it is not yet permissible today to unveil the ultimate secrets of this doctrine”. This Mani path of the redemption of evil is described in *The Temple Legend*” as the story of the light being devoured by the darkness, not battling against it. Yet in that process, the light enters as seed force into the darkness and lays the foundation

for its destruction. The dragon eats the light and through that the dragon is overcome from the inside out.

*The essence of Manichaeism teaching relates to the doctrine of good and evil. In ordinary thought, good and evil are two irreducible qualities, one of which, goodness, must destroy the other, evil. To Manichaeans, however, evil is integral to the cosmos and collaborates in its evolution, and it will eventually be absorbed and transfigured by goodness. (Steiner, An Esoteric Cosmology, GA 94)*

Sergei Prokofieff in his book on the Masters of esoteric Christianity presents Mani as one of these Masters, particularly for the West, meaning the Americas as opposed to Europe. Prokofieff continues to build an association with this encounter with evil and the new experience of the Christ in the etheric realm. *These two mysteries, the mystery of the etheric Christ and the mystery of evil, are inseparably connected with one another....* He follows this with a quote from Steiner: *Through the experience of evil, it will become possible for Christ to appear again [in etheric form].* GA 185, Oct 25, 1918

Here we come particularly to the relationship of this Venus loop and the conjunction on January 8<sup>th</sup> which has brought that “corner” of the Venus pentagram in the Archer in relation to Pluto. We are in a time which seems evident to many, when the forces of evil have now begun an attack on the proper development of the “I”. This is the current world dilemma brought on by the covid pandemic. I have written about this in articles around the Saturn, Jupiter and Pluto meetings last year. In this time with covid, we see the emergence of the work of the Asuras against the “I”, and particularly in how the “I” must realize its further development in the consciousness soul, within the physical body. Prokofieff quotes Steiner in this regard: *These forces of evil which are operative in the universe must be assimilated by human beings. By this means, they implant in their being the seed which enables them to experience the spiritual life of the consciousness soul.* (GA 185, Oct. 26, 1918)

This is the current crisis, or judgement, that has been taking place in the stars of the Archer and face us as the consequences of the world failures of humanity to take up the necessary spiritual work of the I in the consciousness soul. The consequences of the materialistic world perspective on the I of the human have emerged as an entity and activity of the Asuric forces and the Soratic forces as the “anti-I” forces. These are essentially different from the challenges from Lucifer and Ahriman. It is for this reason that the task of Mani is emerging as the work of encountering evil in a new way. Rudolf Steiner describes this Asuric activity in the following way:

*The evil brought by the Ahrimanic Spirits can be shed in the course of karma. But the evil brought by the Asuric powers cannot be expunged in this way. Whereas the good Spirits instituted pain and suffering, illness and death in order that despite the possibility of evil, man’s evolution may still advance, whereas the good Spirits made possible the working of karma to the end that the Ahrimanic powers might be resisted and the evil made good, it will not be so easy to counter the Asuric powers as earth-existence takes its course. For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man’s being, the consciousness soul together with the ‘I’, to unite with earthly materiality...*

*These Asuric powers are heralded to-day by the prevailing tendency to live wholly in the material world and to be oblivious of the reality of spiritual beings and spiritual worlds... Today they deceive him by various means into thinking that his ‘I’ is a product of the physical world only...*

Rudolf Steiner, Berlin, 22 March 1909

The current crisis is a kind of judgement on humanity, a judgement brought on us by ourselves, our own failures to realize the spiritual nature of the I and the human being through the proper work of the consciousness soul. Yet, as quoted above by Prokofieff, the mystery of evil is inseparable from the

mystery of the Christ in the etheric realm, meaning the two come together. It brings to mind a statement by Alfred Heidenreich in the booklet, *The Risen Christ and the Etheric Christ*, in which he explains the Greek words for “second coming” or the re-appearance of Christ and for “final judgement” which Steiner addresses in *From Jesus to Christ*, on how the event of the etheric Christ coincides with the Christ becoming the Lord of Karma, or the judge of karma. The word for second coming is “Parousia” which means “presence, or advent”. The Greek word for judgement means “crisis”. So, the statements in the gospels which bring together calamity and crisis with the appearance of the Christ in the clouds, can be interpreted as: Parousia brings crisis. The presence of Christ brings crisis or judgement to the world.

So, this seemingly insignificant conjunction of Venus and the Sun in the Archer and the threefold conjunction of Venus with Pluto (for more detail on Pluto see videos on the Outer Planets at [astrosophy.com](http://astrosophy.com)) carry great potentiality or great “presence” as well as great crisis. The two are inseparable. The Raising of the Youth of Nain which this conjunction carries as memory and as active seed force, represent the healing of the great mystery stream of Isis of the past through the new initiation by Christ, which offers the ever-present opportunity for renewal through the new Christian mysteries, which is anthroposophy, the stream of Rosenkreuz and of Mani. This conjunction on January 8<sup>th</sup> is the activation so to speak, or the call for humanity to awaken to this Mani impulse in the world today. Through this recognition and experience of evil in its current manifestation in the world, it brings the possibility for the new Christ experience.

In “star language” this Venus “corner” in the Archer and the meetings with Pluto carry the great question of the events of the past two years: WHO are we as true human beings? The cosmic vertical axis of Gemini and Archer call for the move from dualism to trinity out of the power of the Christ I in us. There is a qualitative difference in the two opposite constellations but in their essence, it is the same challenge. It is challenge of dualism as it manifests in all aspects of life, from binarism in materialism and technology to the old religious dualism of good and evil, of above and below, even of faith and knowledge. All of this past dualism has brought us into the complete separation of materialism and now is the question of arriving at a new trinity, a new image of the human I AM standing between the dualism as the “middle” healing and transforming point. This can be the new story of Archer/Twins.

So we can perhaps conclude a deep and complex story barely articulated, by simply placing the following picture of the heavens during these weeks in our mind’s eye: the Sun (our higher I AM) meeting Venus (which carries the impulse of the new Christian Mysteries on Earth, the new “presence” of Christ and in particular the Manichean task of the encounter with evil) and the threefold meeting with Pluto (which now carry the forces that bring destruction of world-shaking proportions and the activity of the Asuras in the assault on the I). Yet this all offers both the challenge and opportunity to come to the new experience of the I AM in our time and to take up evil out of this transforming power.

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[astrosophy.com](http://astrosophy.com)

Non-Steiner Sources on Mani used for this article:

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