

Spring 2005

By Kenneth Bowser

Astrologers draw conclusions about the directions of events in the world from the relationships of the outer planets: Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto with each other and the parts of the zodiac they travel through. Mars is admitted to this group when it is retrograde and consequently slow in motion. The inner planets are too ephemeral, due to their speed, to produce lasting effects, although they often act as triggers. The positions of the planets are referenced here to the fixed sidereal zodiac that was standardized in the 1st millennium B.C. at Babylon.

Jupiter

Jupiter, the most fortunate planet, is in Virgo through the spring and summer of this year. It enters Libra in the first week of October. Jupiter is associated with expansion, success and profit at its best, and waste, snobbery and extravagance at its worst. Before the discovery of the outer planets (Uranus in 1781, Neptune in 1846 and Pluto in 1930), all five of the planets visible to the naked eye ruled two signs of the zodiac. The Sun and the Moon were each allocated only one zodiac sign. Jupiter was associated with Sagittarius and Pisces where the Jupiter principle functioned well. The opposite signs, Gemini and Virgo, were considered less than auspicious placements for Jupiter. Neptune was admitted to the astrological planetary lexicon immediately after its discovery, and after a few decades of observation, it became clear that Neptune was a better fit for Pisces than Jupiter. Still, Jupiter wasn't given dominion over Pisces in the older scheme for fanciful reasons. It has much in common with Pisces. Virgo, the sign opposite Pisces, is therefore an ancient debility for Jupiter. Mercury's constellations Gemini and Virgo are about facts, figures, reading, writing, academia, the laboratory, business, the nuts and bolts of axioms, rules and hands-on reality. They relate to a head-down orientation absorbed in a book, study or experiment, although of the two, Gemini is decidedly more playful, irreverent and mischievous. Jupiter is an expansive, head-up quality bored by the minutia and limitations of mere facts and figures. The big picture orientation of Jupiter runs into a quality inimical to its essential nature in Virgo. Jupiter is decidedly frugal, even tight-fisted in Virgo, quite unlike the generally generous nature of the greater benefic planet. Venus, the lesser benefic, is also badly placed in Virgo.

Virgo is the most analytical and intellectual sign in the zodiac, but also the least inclined toward sentiment. It is a methodical, detail oriented quality that excels in the classroom and in a clinical laboratory environment. Virgo is also particularly associated with medical, health and diet related issues. One might reasonably expect improvement in health care legislation when Jupiter transits through Virgo but typically that doesn't happen. When Jupiter was last in Virgo in 1993, health care reform, which President Clinton had made a top priority, was foiled by the Republicans. In the late winter and early spring of 2005 President Bush actually cut Medicare funding and reconfigured drug discounts and payments for senior citizens which has been decried nation-wide and which

few people can figure out how to access. The Democrats were only able to restore some of the cuts. Real improvement in health care legislation goes wanting.

Mercury's signs Gemini and Virgo are also associated with transportation and the assimilation, evaluation and transmission of data. In the winter and spring of 2005 with Jupiter in Virgo, the improvement that might well be expected in car sales has been confounded by the fact that Jupiter is debilitated in Virgo and square Saturn. General Motors in March cut in half its sales projection for the entire year. The rising price of gasoline has punished car sales. Jupiter trine Neptune in the winter and spring of this year is symbolic of rising oil prices and ultimately rising interest rates as well. When Jupiter was in Gemini in 2001 and 2002, the U.S. economy was so bad that cars could only be sold in sufficient volume to avoid layoffs by offering very low and, in some cases, no interest rate loans and cash incentives. The automobile industry sacrificed its profit margins to maintain market share. That is a good example of how a debilitated planet acts in the real world. Jupiter is compromised in both Gemini and Virgo. This year with Jupiter in Virgo square Saturn in Gemini, car sales are plummeting and soon the U.S. auto manufacturers will have cars they can't sell because they are too heavy and powerful to return good mileage. At the moment, it costs \$50 to fill a twenty-gallon tank in California with premium gasoline. That will crush car sales for all but the wealthy.

Jupiter and Saturn as a combination have long been considered symbolic of religious institutions. It is noteworthy that on the day of the death of Pope John Paul II, April 2, 2005, both the Sun and the Moon became involved with the Jupiter-Saturn square that is the major feature of the winter and spring of this year. The Sun, by its opposition to Jupiter and the Moon by its opposition to Saturn, created a grand square that obviously demarcated the end of one papal reign and the beginning of another.

Even though Jupiter is not well disposed in Virgo in the large, in the life of an individual, transiting Jupiter can still bring raises, promotions, acceptance into graduate or other schools, academies and programs as well as recovery from injury or illness. The people who will benefit most in the spring of 2005 are those whose natal Suns closely configure transiting Jupiter when it is stationary and applying to its station, i.e. apparently motionless in the sky, during May and June, especially the last week of May and the first half of June. Birthdays in any year within a day on either side of October 2nd and March 30th get the effect most powerfully; somewhat less potent is the effect on those born within a day on either side of July 1st and December 30th; and significant but to a still lesser degree, is the effect on those born within a day on either side of January 29th and May 30th. The locale where Jupiter is strongest is the one where the planet stations in the zenith, i.e. directly overhead, which are all locations on and near the parallel 2° South. The largest cities near this parallel of latitude are Guayaquil, Ecuador; Belem, Brazil; Nairobi, Kenya; and Padang on Sumatra (Indonesia). People living in latitudes well north and south of these places will still feel the very significant impact of stationary Jupiter particularly in May and June if they have natal planets that are touched by it.

Saturn

Saturn is associated with contraction, loss and difficulty at worst, and stability, structure and tradition at best. Saturn will be in Gemini until June 3, when it enters Cancer where it will stay until the summer of 2007. When Saturn enters Cancer the persistent increase in the price of homes is likely to peak and decline, at least in constant dollars. Cancer is the home of the Moon. The Moon is symbolic of houses, homes, land, family, lineage, one's psychological home base, the important women in one's life and one's physical person, the Sun being symbolic of the spirit that animates the physical vehicle. Land is usually a good investment but it's possible to pay too much, especially in places like New York and San Francisco where the sky has been the limit. Expect that the seller's market will be supplanted by a buyer's market while Saturn is in Cancer.

The Jupiter-Saturn square that dominates the winter and spring of 2005 is ultimately a good thing because it forces economies of scale and other increases in productivity that eventually nurture the slow, steady growth and the enduring value that are the hallmarks of this combination. In the short term, Jupiter-Saturn combinations symbolize depressed stock prices, the end of business cycles and the visible results of government policies that have brought problems in their wake. President Bush's tax cut, which was transparently short-sighted to start with, has run out of steam. Federal revenue is currently at the 1999 level due to the tax cuts but the President proposes spending more than 33% beyond that revenue level in his new budget. We already *are* spending at that level and have been since 2003. Mr. Bush can only print more money and cut entitlement programs, since he refuses to raise taxes as he should to pay for the war in Iraq. Economic history is littered with ruined administrations and fallen governments that tried to follow a "guns and butter" policy only to find their currency decimated as a consequence. Lyndon Johnson's unwillingness to fund the Vietnam War with increased taxes caused the dollar to be devalued twice after his term of office (in 1971 and 1972). When George Bush came into office there was a budget surplus. Now the deficit spending under his watch has exceeded even the levels of the Reagan administrations. Under Reagan the government accrued more red ink than all other previous administrations combined, beginning with the first administration of George Washington in 1789. That includes the funding for the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the American Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the deficit spending of the Roosevelt administrations. The result of the ill-conceived and simplistic Bush policies is that the dollar is being pummeled in what amounts to a daily devaluation. The Bush camp contends that's a good thing because it makes American goods easier to export, but tell that to the American in Paris who has to pay 135 dollars to buy 100 euros or the American in London who has to pay 200 dollars to buy 100 pounds. Tell it to the treasury secretaries of foreign governments who have to think very hard about the wisdom of buying American treasury securities to finance our foreign trade deficit. Some already think it unwise. South Korea balked for a while in February and then fell into line. That will likely change late this spring when the euro reaches stratospheric levels—levels so high that they may badly hurt European exports as soon as July. The current inverse proportion of the euro to the dollar suggests that the dollar will lose still more value if the euro is headed in the opposite direction. The reasons for this prediction are simple: euro exchange rates were set on January 1, 1999 so that banks could transact business in the new currency; currency and coin were

issued on January 1, 2002 when the public used the euro for the first time. Last year when transiting Jupiter came to the square of the Sun for these two dates, the euro reached all time highs against the dollar. The late spring and early summer will get the highest degree of symbolic pressure to increase the disparity between the dollar and the euro when transiting Jupiter is in and near its station square the euro Sun in May, June and July.

All planets are strongest in their stations for good or ill depending on their intrinsic natures. Unless Saturn is well-placed in Libra or Capricorn, its effects are generally unwelcome. It symbolizes defeat, delay, an unending work regimen and countless variations on trouble. Saturn was stationary on March 22nd, at the very beginning of Northern Hemisphere spring. The people who would have been most pressured by Saturn then, as well as for a month before that time and throughout most of April, are those born within a day on either side of July 12th and January 9th of any year; those born within a day on either side of October 12th and April 10th would have experienced only slightly less difficulty; and those born within a day on either side of March 10th and November 12th would have felt duty-bound, bored and limited in their creativity and general expression. Saturn often feels like drudgery; it represents things that must be done. There is often a great benefit, however, after the completion of what must be done or serious loss for not having done it. Those who have been laboring under Saturn's yoke during the winter and early spring will, for the most part, feel some relief in the late spring.

Saturn stations at 22° North declination which means it will appear directly overhead in the zenith at all locations at the parallel 22° North terrestrial latitude. Places on that parallel may be especially hard hit by the effect of this planet traditionally called the "greater malefic." The biggest cities on and near this parallel are: Mecca, Saudi Arabia; Nagpur, India; Hanoi, Vietnam; Hong Kong, China; Lihue on Kauai in the Hawaiian Islands, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosi and Tampico, Mexico.

Uranus

With the exception of a three-week peek into Aquarius in May-June 2001, Uranus has been in Aquarius since the winter of 2002. Uranus represents sudden, shocking developments that careen through fixed conditions, obsolescence and false assumptions like lightning trying to find the ground. Uranus is decidedly benefic but frequently leaves people shaken at the same time. It represents innovation, options and revolution at its best, and instability, unpredictability and lack of constancy at its worst. Uranus is at home in Aquarius which tends to increase its desirable effect. Generally, no matter how upsetting in the short term, Uranus brings freedom, excitement and fulfillment in the long run. Uranus reaches the middle of sidereal Aquarius by the end of spring. It stays in the vicinity of the third magnitude delta star in Aquarius, called *Skat* from late April until mid-summer. *Skat* is considered dual natured, that is, positive in some respects and simultaneously bad in others. When Uranus was last conjoined to this star during the spring and summer of 1921 and the winter of 1921/22, there were widespread unemployment, business collapses and declines in production in the industrialized

countries, especially the United States, Great Britain and Japan. The problems were associated with wringing out the inflationary pressures of World War I that had continued to run riot after the war was over. In the U.S. wholesale prices declined 26% in the first six months of 1921; industrial production declined 32% between March 1920 and July 1921; exports fell throughout 1921 until February 1922 when they were only 27% of their high figure reached in June 1919; wages fell precipitously throughout 1921. Unemployment in England exceeded 15% in 1921; foreign trade was almost cut in half, industrial production declined by almost a third and wholesale prices declined by more than a third, compared to the previous year.

When Uranus had been previously conjoined to *Skat* one orbit of Uranus before that, in 1837, the U.S. experienced its first depression via the Panic of 1837 that dwarfed all previous financial downturns in the U.S. economy. Uranus was close to *Skat* in the spring and summer of 1837 and again in the winter of 1837/38. The problems of the late 1830s were exacerbated by the absence of a federal bank, which President Andrew Jackson had deliberately ruined during his administrations; but the problems in 1837 were basic economic out-of-balance conditions: too much credit, unfavorable balance of payments, inflation and a weak currency all fueled by land speculation. The problem was initiated when Jackson required on August 15, 1836, that all federally owned land be bought with gold or silver. Land speculation was hobbled instantly but so was virtually every other type of business. There was, in effect, a run on the banks. Everyone demanded payment in gold. Bad harvests pushed the economy over the brink. By May 10, 1837 no bank would issue gold or silver. Businesses failed on an epic scale. The depression lasted four years and by some measures, six years. The suffering was felt at the same time in England on a huge scale particularly in terms of bankruptcies, failed brokerage houses and unemployment. Neptune was in Capricorn in 1837 just as it is now. The signs that relate to land are Cancer and Capricorn. Cancer is particularly symbolic of lesser scale real estate: houses, barracks, apartments, one's backyard garden and the like; Capricorn, typically rural and associated with farming, symbolizes the cultivated field, pasturage and forest. Farm land and real estate had been inflating in the U.S. at a wild rate in the 1830s and had got out of hand. It appears that the effect of Uranus with *Skat* was to precipitate a crisis that quickly ended inflation and speculation, but at great cost to the man in the street. The stage is set for a repeat performance this spring. The prudent person is well-advised to buy gold now.

People take chances, feel lucky and make bids for freedom when transiting Uranus is in play in their lives. It is a revolutionary planet in the large but on the scale of an individual life, Uranus is headstrong, rebellious and often ungovernable. It is entrepreneurial and independent in action; those strongly affected by it want to be the boss unfettered by those with a lesser vision; it is determined and can't be deterred from an inspired task. Typically the people strongly tinged by Uranus are inclined toward the new, the unusual and to feel intensely the need to express their individuality. When transiting Uranus lands on a natal planet, especially the Sun, people are likely to wake up intellectually, entertain radical propositions, or make the courageous move to change the conditions in their lives that brings accolades from some and censure from others. Travel, especially to exotic places, is a commonplace under Uranus transits. But on a

more prosaic note, Uranus will breathe new life into a stale situation that heretofore appeared hopeless. If it is true that dream-eaters starve in an artless land, then Uranus serves up a feast, as if in response to a request from deep within oneself. It may destabilize an ongoing situation that could at first seem unnerving, but in the end Uranus promotes growth. It also represents things that happen to the native for the first time like sex, leaving home to attend college and gaining important positions or realizations. The people who get Uranus in full measure in the spring and early summer of 2005 are those born within a day on either side of March 1st and September 2nd of any year; those born within a day on either side of June 1st and December 2nd are almost as strongly affected; those born within a day on either side of July 2nd and November 2nd have less forceful but stimulating experiences with interesting people, especially foreigners.

Uranus comes into a 150° relationship with Jupiter, called a quincunx or inconjunct, that is exact on May 7th and again on July 8th. This pair is a wonderfully auspicious combination. It is often symbolic of discovery and the ascendancy of a new technology that suddenly makes possible what had been proclaimed in the past to be forever impossible. It is very good for the stock market too and may haul the American markets temporarily out of the doldrums. It is not enough, however, to rescue the U.S. markets from the economic difficulties that attend high oil prices. Certainly though, it will provide some up days in May to contrast with the down days brought on by the quincunx between Saturn and Pluto which is exact on May 23. The high-flying stock market of the late 1990s was broken by Saturn inconjunct Pluto in the winter of 2000.

Uranus will be stationary on June 14th. It will appear in the zenith through all locales on or near the parallel of 8° 15' South latitude. The largest cities on and near that parallel are: Trujillo, Peru; Recife, Brazil; Banyuwangi, Java (Indonesia); Raba, Sumbawa (Indonesia); and Kerema, Papua (New Guinea).

Neptune

Neptune is an insidious malefic. At its very best it relates to high levels of spiritual awareness, exquisite sensitivity, inspiration, idealism, ability in the dramatic arts and a deep sense of compassion for one's fellow man. Its downside relates to various states of addiction from pseudo-religious fervor, gambling, drugs and sexual depravity, to paranoia, dependency and the real or imagined circumstance of being trapped, confined or subject to another. It is a boundless quality that expands, exaggerates and inflates, often in a glamorous way, yet weakens and makes less substantial whatever it touches. Neptune stations on May 19th at 22° vs 47' only ½° from the iota star in Capricorn and 1½° from the zeta star in Capricorn, where Neptune has not been since 1841, five years before it was discovered. On the day that Neptune is stationary, May 19th, it will rise at the latitude of the summit of Mt. Rainier (46° N 51'10") in Washington when 16h 30m 01s of right ascension is culminating in the meridian there (121° W 45' 37"). The right ascension of Antares's apparent place for that date will be 16h 29m 42s. That is, Antares culminates in the meridian or mid-heaven at Mt. Rainier in May when transiting and stationary Neptune rises there. The difference, 19 seconds of sidereal time, between the rising planet and the culminating star is equivalent to less than half a mile. As Neptune

moves off its station it will rise within ten miles of the summit of Mt. Rainier well into June. The Cascade range may rumble to life then like a summer storm. Antares is a particularly violent star when it is culminating: the strongest position in any horoscope. The effect is made worse when a malefic planet is simultaneously on the horizon. Neptune rises with eight other stars in Scorpio through the latitudes of the lower forty-eight states from the Canadian border to Key West during the late spring. Neptune is hard to prepare for. It entraps its victims and often relates to waterborne and fluid-borne difficulties to include mud, pyroclastic flows and lava. Neptune will also appear in the zenith through Lake Titicaca in Bolivia and southern Peru throughout the entire spring. That area has to be considered ripe for seismic disturbances until the late summer.

Neptune elevates, enervates and elucidates the awareness of one who is on the path of spiritual initiation or profound artistic expression, but it confuses, conflates and confounds most other endeavors. Women who have transiting Neptune go over their natal Suns often find the men in their lives weakened or subject to illness while the transit is in play; sometimes the problem is a paralysis of the spirit. In combination with other planets Neptune transits may equate with renunciation or the beginning of regular and intense meditative practices; but it more commonly introduces worry, dismay and the sensation that one is subject to circumstances or used, abused or made a scapegoat. High emotional tension frequently accompanies this transit. It may merely be symbolic of the hand-wringing and floor-pacing that attends the knowledge that one's child is in Iraq or running with the wrong crowd at home, or the frustration of being passed over for promotion and feeling trapped in one's financial and circumstantial station in life. Most people are happy to see it leave the vicinity of the natal Sun or Moon. Those born within a day on either side of February 5th and August 9th of any year will get the full effect in the spring of 2005; those born within a day of May 7th and November 9th will feel a somewhat lesser version of Neptune to their natal Suns; those born within a day on either side of June 8th and October 10th will get the easiest transit of Neptune among those earmarked for it in the spring of this year.

When Neptune is stationary in celestial longitude on May 19th it will appear directly overhead in the zenith or nearly so at all parallels on or near 15° S 40'. The largest cities on or near that latitude are: Arequipa, Peru; La Paz, Bolivia; Namibe, Angola; Lusaka, Zambia; Blantyre and Limbe, Mulawi; Nampula and Porto Mocambo, Mozambique and Cooktown, Queensland (Australia).

Pluto

Pluto makes extreme whatever it touches for good or ill depending on whatever else it contacts. It can be miraculous with a benefic and distinctly difficult with a malefic. By itself Pluto is like the goddess Shiva the destroyer, or the phoenix that rises from its own ashes. It travels through the zodiac leaving both calamity and renewal in its wake, but not intermediate levels of manifestation. It is most powerful in Scorpio, where it has been since 1993. When Pluto stationed at 29° ♏, 42' on March 27th, it was the first time since 1758 that Pluto had been in that part of the zodiac (Pluto requires 248 years to complete one orbit of the Sun). Pluto stopped its forward motion scant seconds of arc

from the exact conjunction in right ascension with the theta star in Scorpio. The upsilon star in Scorpio is $1\text{ and } \frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ to the west of Pluto in its station and the much brighter lambda star is only 1° to the west of Pluto in its station and throughout the spring of 2005. Together, the upsilon and lambda stars in Scorpio constitute the business end of the Scorpion: the stinger in the tail. Pluto went over the stinger last in 1757, a year when the British took control over huge portions of India due to a significant military victory. The stinger is considered dangerous and venomous: the death-dealing part of the constellation. This is the first time that Pluto will have reached the stinger in the Scorpion's tail in the modern era. Pluto will retrograde back into the stinger during the first week of June when at the same time Saturn will enter Cancer. Together they should set off various portents that were primed by the Capricorn solar ingress earlier in January — the master horoscope for the year. Accordingly, California and Washington in North America and the mid-latitudes of Chile in South America will likely be rocked by severe seismic disturbances especially in the first two weeks of June as the spring draws to a close.

Pluto usually makes people feel isolated and lonely. They may also confront the most important issues of their entire lives while this transit is in play. Pluto in combination with a benefic like Jupiter can catapult someone onto center stage of political life or cause someone to be picked out of a crowd for a great award like a Nobel prize. Pluto in combination with a malefic can cause someone to look their mortality in the face due to illness, injury or age. Pluto often represents a crisis situation that makes all other issues pale in comparison. When one's own mortality, divorce or the death of parents are not at hand — events over which one cannot exercise choice, Pluto places people alone into the crossroads of life with fateful choices to make. Entire scenarios unfold before one's eyes, plain to see. There is usually an easier path on one fork and a harder and perhaps more honorable and virtuous path on the other. People often feel at such times that the meaning of their life experience can be summed up in a few difficult decisions. Frequently people are left alone by the death of friends, or conversely, an extraordinary and powerful personality appears and changes one's life forever. Sometimes the last child leaves the nest to go off to college and the silence in the house is deafening. Pluto transits make people realize that they don't know the ultimate answers about their lives: "Who am I and what is this (life experience)?" Yet there is a gnawing feeling that one holds the key to those questions within oneself. Pluto is deep. When people have time to reflect during a Pluto transit, they often begin to ponder the nature of the self beyond the petty egotism of their outer nature.

People born within a day on either side of December 15th and June 14th in any year get the full brunt of Pluto in the winter and spring of 2005; those born within a day on either side of March 14th and September 17th get a somewhat lesser version of the Pluto transit during the same period; those people affected still less yet still within its purview in the winter and spring of 2005, are those born within a day on either side of April 14th and August 17th. Pluto and Neptune are very close in declination during the spring of 2005. Pluto appears in the zenith within fifty miles north of the locales where Neptune is also in the zenith. The places in their path are within that narrow swath of latitude throughout the globe.

