



Malefics Part 1:
Mars, the Lesser Malefic

(2012) Enid Newberg

Mars: Physical Characteristics

- ❑ Mars has approximately half the diameter of Earth. It is less dense than Earth, having about 15% of Earth's volume and 11% of the mass.
- ❑ The Mars surface area is only slightly less than the total area of Earth's dry land.
- ❑ Mars is larger and more massive than Mercury, but Mercury has a higher density. This results in the two planets having a nearly identical gravitational pull at the surface.
- ❑ The red-orange appearance of the Martian surface is caused by iron oxide, more commonly known as hematite, or rust.



Mars ♂



- ❑ Where Venus was the god of love, Mars was the god of war in Classical mythology.
- ❑ In Western psychological astrology, the planet rules the male half of the human psyche and the outward turning of emotions, and how the individual seeks out and expresses his or herself to others, desire.
- ❑ In Mars, the instinct for self-preservation is expressed in its aggressive form. It rules the survival instinct and the need to take action, the urge to define and defend, to procreate, and to fight for what we are passionate about.



Mars ♂

General Meaning

- ❖ Outward desire, action, self-assertion, aggression, strength, impulsiveness, physical activities, confidence, ambition, assertive, violence, reckless, combative, cruel, and brave.
- ❖ A weak Mars can result in anger problems, sexual issues, difficulty with will-power and getting things done



Mars

Masculine, The Lesser Malefic



- ❑ Mars is the “Lesser Malefic,” and is the “author of Quarrels, Strifes, Contentions” bold, confident, immoveable, unwilling to obey or submit to anybody. *William Lilly (1647)*
- ❑ Hot and dry. Masculine, nocturnal, composed of fire, burning. Destructive and harmful; hot, hard, sharp and red. Length, dryness, and coarseness.
- ❑ boldness and bravery, rendering the mind imperious, versatile, generous, magnanimous, confident, rash, contemptuous, angry, violent, stern, commanding or excited. *Alan Leo (1911)*

Mars

Joseph Crane, *"The Hellenistic Legacy"*, p. 25

- ❑ Mars, the planet of anger, the god of war. Mars also reflects troubled and difficult circumstances... The calamities of Saturn are often slow and inexorable; the difficulties brought by Mars are sudden and more immediately destructive.
- ❑ If Saturn is like finding that your house sits on a toxic dump and it will be impossible to ever sell, Mars is like coming home to find that vandals and thieves have paid a visit.
- ❑ If Saturn is oppressive, Mars is aggressive. If Saturn is cold and dry, Mars is hot and dry.
- ❑ Mars scorches, and it brings situations where you react by wanting to fight or retaliate.
- ❑ With Mars we want to fight, to give somebody the "what for." At the very least we want to stomp our feet and give somebody a withering stare. Although we will later forget what made us so angry, at the time our hostile or angry response consumes our thinking and emotions.



Mars

Joseph Crane, *"The Hellenistic Legacy"*, p. 28, 35



- ❑ Mars indicates people who fight or exert themselves physically for a living...
- ❑ The Mars personality is active, ready to attack. ... Mars people are also inventive and industrious, but can be treacherous and harsh. Venus helps this person's manners and elegance, and gives greater affection, but if Venus is poorly placed, he or she may be a coarse ogler and a seducer.

♂ Mars

Rules Aries & Scorpio

Ruler of
Masculine
Cardinal Fire
Aries

- Mars can be as if on steroids. In a diurnal chart, the heat can become excessive and may create tyrants who will not tolerate opposition or interference and are very impatient and impulsive but with considerable courage and initiative.
- Diurnal Mars prefers Aries

Ruler of
Feminine
Fixed Water
Scorpio

- The fixed feminine tones down Mars' recklessness and bravado, and gives opportunities for meaningful – not pointless – conflict.
- Nocturnal Mars prefers Scorpio

♂ Mars

Exalted in Capricorn

Exalted in
Feminine
Cardinal
Earth
Capricorn

- In Capricorn, Mars' impulsiveness is muted and the planet instead performs with greater intention, practical resourcefulness, and perseverance.
- Cancer opposes Capricorn. Jupiter is the reverse of Mars - exalted in Cancer and depressed in Capricorn. Jupiter is about life and abundance, Mars is about vexation and death.
- In Cancer, Mars becomes overly sensitive.

♂ Ares

Greek mythology



Ares, Kyknos, Herakles,
*Athenian black-figure
amphora. C6th B.C.,
Worcester Art Museum*

- ❑ Greek: Ares. Son of Zeus and Hera. He was a destabilizing force and not a major god of worship.
- ❑ Whereas the goddess Athena represented thoughtfulness and wisdom in the affairs of war, Mars loved and delighted in the tumult and trauma of war for its own sake.
- ❑ Mars was the god of the physical, savage or violent side of war & battle and his assistance was often arbitrary and uncertain.
- ❑ In the myths where he came in conflict with another higher power, he was nearly always defeated.
- ❑ No wife is mentioned in the Greek, but he did have a lover – Aphrodite.

Homeric Hymn 8 to Ares

(trans. Evelyn-White) (Greek epic B.C.)



- ❑ Ares, exceeding in strength, chariot-rider, golden-helmed, doughty in heart, shield-bearer, Saviour of cities, harnessed in bronze, strong of arm, unwearying, mighty with the spear,
- ❑ O defender of Olympos, father of warlike Nike (Victory), ally of Themis, stern governor of the rebellious, leader of the righteous men, sceptred King of manliness, who whirl your fiery sphere [the star Mars] among the planets in their sevenfold courses through the aither wherein your blazing steeds ever bear you above the third firmament of heaven;
- ❑ hear me, helper of men, giver of dauntless youth! Shed down a kindly ray from above upon my life, and strength of war, that I may be able to drive away bitter cowardice from my head and crush down the deceitful impulses of my soul.
- ❑ Restrain also the keen fury of my heart which provokes me to tread the ways of blood-curdling strife.
- ❑ Rather, O blessed one, give you me boldness to abide within the harmless laws of peace, avoiding strife and hatred and the violent fiends of death.

Ares & Aphrodite



www.theoi.com

- Ares casts a spear from his chariot, driven by the goddess Aphrodite; Eros aims his bow.
- *Image from the Musée du Louvre, Paris, France. Attributed to the the Suessula Painter. Dated: ca 400 - 390 BC*

- Though married to Hephaestus (god of the forge), Aphrodite (Venus) started an affair with Ares, Hephaestus's stepbrother.
- Learning of the affair, Hephaestus set a trap for the lovers. He told Aphrodite that he was going to be gone for several days knowing that Aphrodite and Ares would take advantage of his absence.
- Hephaestus had rigged the bed with a metal net that dropped on Ares and Aphrodite and trapped the two lovers.
- Hephaestus and the rest of the Olympian gods gathered to see the unfaithful pair. Poseidon had pity on Aphrodite and asked Hephaestus to release them and make up with his wife.
- Ares and Aphrodite had children together, and several of them are highlighted in various myths

♂ Mars – Roman Mythology



*Mars from Villa Ludovisi,
Rome*

- ❑ The protector of Rome, Mars was second only in importance to Jupiter. He was the son of Jupiter & Juno and the father of Romulus and Remus (the founders of Rome). Originally, his wife was Nerio or Nerine (valor). In the later Roman empire, Nerio became identified with Minerva (wisdom)
- ❑ His sacred animals were the woodpecker, wolf and horse. Originally an agricultural guardian, god of spring, growth in nature, and fertility, and the protector of cattle.
- ❑ Linked to Ares, he became the god of war, defense and protection, the use of military power to secure peace. Also looked upon as a god with prophetic powers.
- ❑ He represents virility as a life force and virtue. He wards off hostile forces. He has multiple names, including
 - ❖ Mars Gradivus, the marching god, sworn to by soldiers.
 - ❖ Mars Quirinus, the protector of civilians whose oaths were required for treaties.
 - ❖ Mars Pater, Mars the father, invoked in agricultural prayers.
 - ❖ Mars Ultor, Mars the avenger.

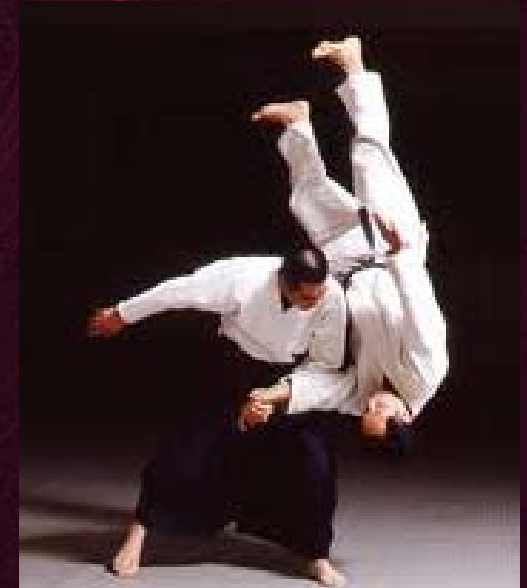
Additional thoughts 1

Green & Sasportas, 1993, p. 177, The Warrior & The Womanizer

- One simple definition of Mars is that it is the fighting principle for the Sun, and in a sense the fighting principle for all the inner planets which lie within its orbit.
- The necessity for a fighting principle is obvious, since there is a big world out there in which sooner or later one will meet conflict or challenges to one's individuality, one's values, and even one's physical and psychological survival.
- Inevitably, we must all fight for what we are... Mars was considered a malefic principle in medieval astrology ... But although the whole thorny realm of aggression and war and conflict it not what we might ideally include in a perfect world, and learning to work with Mars in a conscious and constructive way is no easy task, without Mars we are impotent, and then someone else's Mars will beat us to pulp.



Britney Spears



Additional thoughts 2

Green & Sasportas, 1993, p. 177-178, 184, 192

- This tough little planet gives us our initial definition in life; it is the most basic instrument of separation from the womb and the collective, because the moment we take a stand over what we want or value, we define ourselves as irrevocably separate from others.
- Once Mars is brought out into the open, and the statement is made, it cannot be unmade ... So there is an absolute and irreversible quality about Martial action, which is one of the reasons why many people have trouble owning the planet. ...
- So part of us fears Mars, because once we have acted on our own behalf, we cannot go back on it.
- Because Mars is an “anti-social” planet (it serves *me*, rather than society), life will sooner or later temper the aggressive instinct in us, because other people will not put up with a rampant Mars. At best, they do not like us, and at worst, they lock us up.
- [Mars] is interested in survival and gratification of desire.

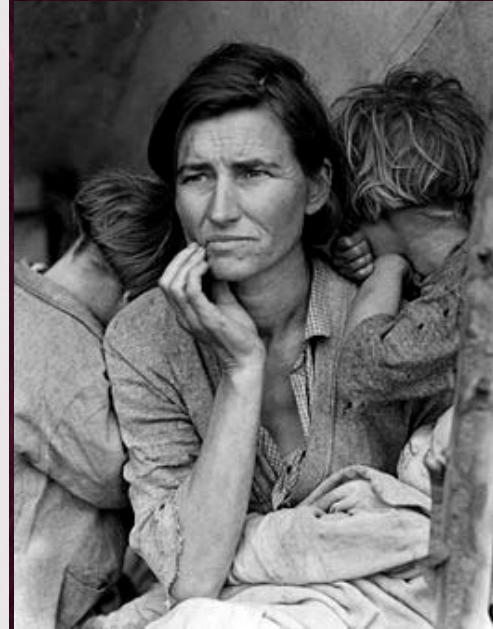


Separation by Edward Munch

Additional thoughts 3

Green & Sasportas, 1993, p. 190-193

- Mars is a powerful trigger for transiting and progressed planets. Because of its direct, physical quality, it seems to reflect a manifestation process – just as the progressed Moon does, but with considerably more force.
- One extremely common result of a disconnected or thwarted Mars is a chronic state of depression. ... All too often the taproot is a profound sense of impotence, frustration and rage, generated by the feeling that one has no capacity for choice, nor power over one's life. ...
 - Many people dissociate from this kind of deep depression, and consciously gear themselves up to keep the surface of life functioning – finding escape routes such as compulsive work, large doses of television, sex, alcohol or tranquilisers ... Mars here inverts and turns against the individual, so that one destroys all one's potentials. It is a kind of death wish ...
 - Fanaticism is also often the product of a blocked Mars, because the more uneasy we feel at that sound of banging and shouting coming from behind the locked door, the more blindly emotional and even violent we become in our efforts to convert others to our conscious viewpoint.
 - It is really very dangerous to go through life repudiating Mars too strongly.



Dorothea Lange's Migrant Mother depicts destitute pea pickers in California, centering on Florence Owens Thompson, age 32, a mother of seven children, in Nipomo, California, March 1936.

Additional thoughts 4

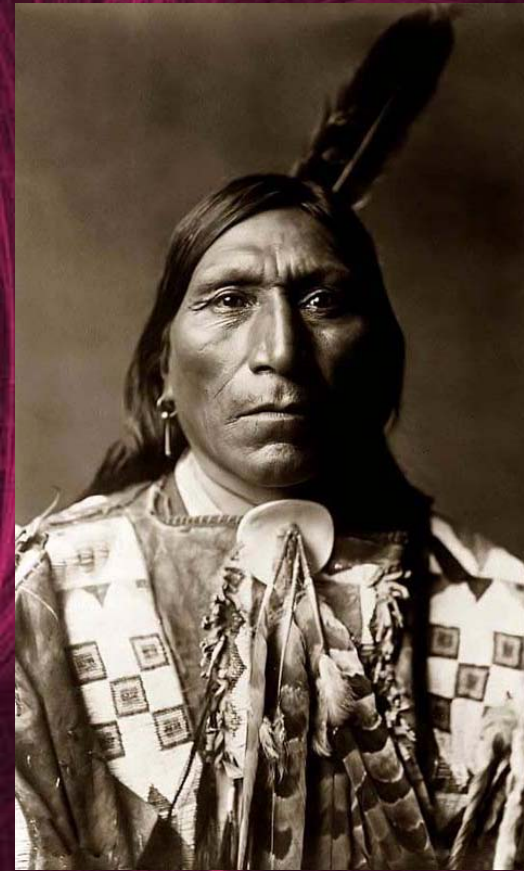
Green & Sasportas, 1993, p. 194-195



- One aspect which often suggests a problem of feeling and expressing potency is the square or opposition of Mars to the Sun.
 - Whatever the natal relationship between these two planets, they need ultimately to be friends, for Mars must offer the Sun its fighting power and the Sun must provide meaning for Mars' battles.
 - If the Sun repudiates Mars (in other words, if we disown our aggression), then we may have vision without any capacity to put it into action. Then it seems that "other people" ... Reject our creative efforts and obstruct us with their ruthless selfishness.
 - If we try to be the Sun without Mars, we castrate ourselves, and wind up inauthentic and powerless ...

Additional thoughts 5

Green & Sasportas, 1993, p. 205



1907. Little Hawk, a
Brule Warrior
By Edward S. Curtis.

- Other planets which form strong angles to Mars colour the manner in which we express our fighting spirit, and also reflect sides of us which either help or hinder our pursuit of goals.
- If we think again of the Labours of Herakles, we might understand planets aspecting Mars to symbolise the kinds of tempering processes which we will undergo during the course of life, because any planet coupled with Mars in this way reflects a kind of Herculean labour.
 - Some planets are comfortable for Mars to accommodate, especially Jupiter, which even in square or opposite offers an intellectual enthusiasm and philosophical dimension to the fighting spirit.
 - But planets such as Saturn, Pluto ... even in trine, seem to suggest a very difficult labour, a hard tempering which hopefully will result in a tough, resilient quality of character rather than bitterness and resentment.

Additional Thoughts from Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)

Thomas Moore (1990), p. 183-184

- ❑ Throughout his writings ... [Ficino] warns against the influence of Mars the relatively few times this planet is mentioned. ... Mars remains for the most part a negative factor in the life of the psyche, to be avoided or at least mollified.
- ❑ Ficino had good reason to warn against Mars: anger, violence, hatred, war, aggression of all kinds, bitterness, and heroism...In our world too, one can go on to find the positive side of Mars only after facing the full potential of his other side.
- ❑ Ficino himself said it: “A person rages against himself in Mars.” It is not only the pressure of a well-armed superego that torments the ego, ... but conflict between many parts of self have the flavor of warfare.



Additional Thoughts 2

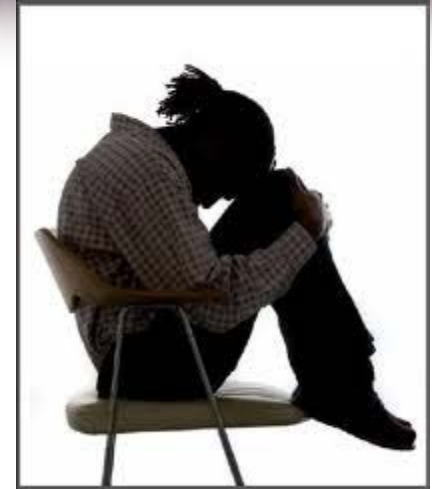
Thomas Moore (1990), p. 184-185

- ❑ Jung held that any unconscious factor, if neglected and repressed, would become so overwhelming that it might wipe away all ego involvement.
- ❑ It might appear at times that Mars himself takes over a body and commits murder, or Venus swamps the ego and drives esteemed senators to burlesque stages and massage parlors.
- ❑ Mars is a collective fantasy at work in the lives of us all as a natural force – Strife, a most fundamental reality posited by early Greek naturalist philosophers. Mars is the collective culprit of the psyche, who causes much havoc but who also plays an irreducible role in the total economy of the soul.
- ❑ In *The Planets*, Ficino claims that “Mars warms the coldest things and energizes the sluggish.” ... “Mars, ruler of Aries, inflames the fervent spirit.”

Additional Thoughts 3

Thomas Moore (1990), p. 185

- ❑ Martian spirit is indeed forceful and feelings can be hurt when his spirit is present, but often the result of keeping feelings placid is simply another form of Mars, the rage against self.
- ❑ It is curious that Mars and Saturn are often linked together, for they correspond to two kinds of depression:
 - ❖ Melancholy as we have studied it, a manifestation of Saturn's lead;
 - ❖ and rage against self, the feeling of having been vanquished by our own power.



Additional Thoughts 4

Thomas Moore (1990), p. 187

- ❑ Fincino ... elaborates ...
 - ❖ Who is bolder than a lover fighting for his loved one? Mars surpasses the other Gods in fortitude since he makes people strong. Venus tames. ...
 - ❖ Venus, often in conjunction, or opposition, or reception, or in sextile or trine with Mars, as we say, checks his malignity.
 - ❖ When Mars rules a person's birth, he bestows greatness of spirit as well as irascibility. If Venus comes near, *she does not impede* the greatness of spirit given by Mars, but she represses the strength of the anger. She seems to tame Mars and make him more mild. But Mars does not tame Venus. If she is the leader, she provides the affect of love. If Mars leads nearby, he renders the heat of Venus's power more ardent.



Venus and Mars

c. 1483. By Sandro Botticelli



- ❑ An allegory of Beauty and Valor. Venus watches Mars sleep while two infant satyrs play carrying his armor as another rests under his arm. A fourth blows a conch shell in his ear in an effort to wake him.

Resources

- ❑ Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (973-1048), *Understanding Astrology*
- ❑ Gryphon Astrology
<http://www.gryphonastrology.com/cosmology.html>
- ❑ Hand, Robert, *Horoscope Symbols* (1981)
- ❑ Ibn Ezra, trans. Epstein, *The Beginning of Wisdom* (1147-1148)
- ❑ Lilly, William. *Christian Astrology* (1647)